

ART AND LETTERS

AN ILLUSTRATED REVIEW

SECOND VOLUME



LONDON

BOUSSOD, VALADON & C^o
116-117, NEW BOND STREET

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
743-745, BROADWAY

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PARIS — THE HAGUE — BERLIN

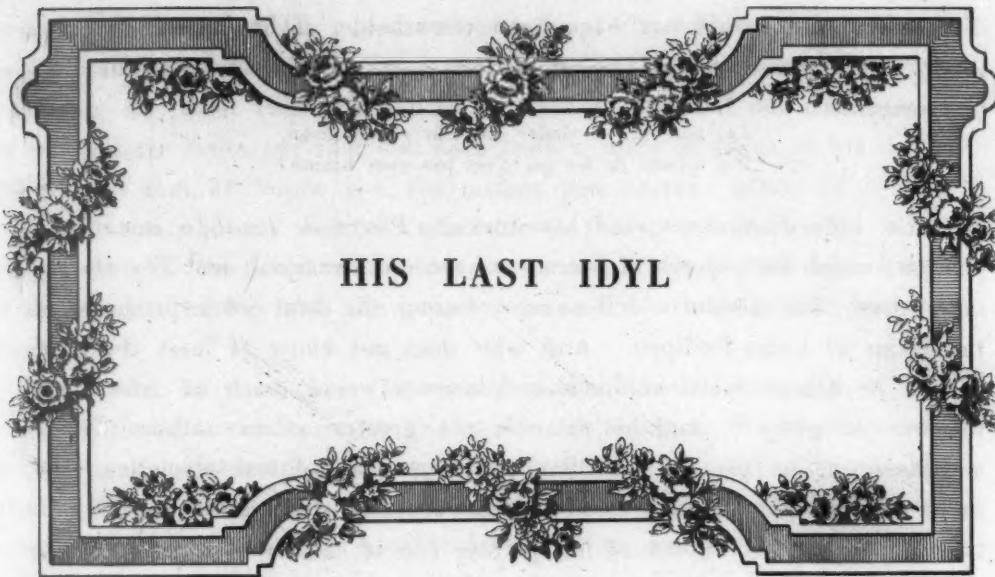
1889

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ART AND LETTERS



During the summer season of 1888, that dismal summer of rain and raw weather, few and rare were the ladies who came to shiver on the beach at—— It was desperately dull there; the long days were spent in watching the rain drip, dense, fine, and unending, yet failing to empty the clouds which shrouded the sky; and if for a moment it ceased, it began again faster than ever. Of an evening, at the Casino, the visitors comforted each other as they best might for spoilt parties of pleasure by playing a race-game, for their numbers were too small for a dance to be very lively.

Of course folks talked of each other, little intrigues were plotted, small gossip was circulated, and all this helped the time to fly. Certain individuals, for one reason or another, attracted general attention more than the rest. Certain men, by reason of their name, of their fame and works, or by their skill in waltzing, or in leading a dance; certain women, by their beauty, or their dress, or their odd ways, or their adventures and love of adventure; in short, all who for any cause stood out against the background of commonplace people, as neutral-tinted as the sky.

Among these figures in the foreground, one of the most attractive was that of M. de Joussieux. His name was noble no doubt, but of no great distinction, and would not have been remarkable, if he himself had not made it illustrious; for he too might say with the great poet, his contemporary :

“J'ai mis, sur le cimier doré du gentilhomme,
Une plume de fer qui n'est pas sans beauté !”

Who, indeed, has not read his works? *Pierre de Beuil*, a romance of passion, which forty years of literature have not swamped, and *The Hesperides*, those fine poems which survive among the best work produced in the reign of Louis-Philippe. And who does not know at least the titles of ten or fifteen more volumes in prose or verse, each of which had its hour of glory? And his fame is not greater as an author than as a statesman; he played a brilliant part in our political struggles, and, under the second Empire, filled various diplomatic posts of high importance. All that is known of his private life is calculated to enhance the interest aroused by the story of his public career. His name is bound up with that of a famous woman, whose tragical fate, in 1846, has furnished material for several romances. His two sons died fighting at Champigny; not long after the war he lost his wife, and he bore with heroic resignation, all these losses which left him to a solitary old age. Had he not voluntarily retired from active life, his name, to this day, would be in every mouth, but in 1883, having reached his seventy-fifth year, he calmly carried out a decision he had long since come to. He was determined not to outlive his powers; though he was still in the heyday of his energy—one might almost say of his genius—he suddenly gave up writing, sent his resignation to the Senate, withdrew into private life, and doomed the fine powers of his mind to premature repose for fear of finding them break down. At the present day, at nearly eighty, he is still hale, slight, upright, and handsome. His white head is a grand type of old age; calm, powerful, and thoughtful, like the heads we admire in Da Vinci's noble drawings. The steadiness of his commanding eye gives his features the stamp of lingering youth. His extreme courtesy of speech leads one to forget a certain haughtiness of air and manner; but this

courtesy is wholly external. It is the politeness of a man of the world, and not the outcome of an expansive or widely sympathetic nature. M. de Joussieux is never off his guard. After talking with him for a long time, and on all sorts of subjects, you remain under the impression that you know him no better than you did before, and that he will not condescend to any greater intimacy; that you have been a mere accident in his day's round, and that he forgot you the instant you parted; hence he is one of those men who are courted, not without a tinge of fear. He is in every sense of the word a superior man; and if he has all the charm of superiority, he has also the consciousness of it, which isolates him on his height.

Not caring to move his widower's household bodily into one of the furnished houses which are to be let for the season, M. de Joussieux, with only a manservant, took up his abode at the hotel. He ate his meals at the table d'hôte, accepting the deference paid him with the haughty affability which I have endeavoured to describe, selecting this one or that one of the company, whom he was pleased to honour with his conversation, and ignoring those who bored him. For that matter, he ignored every one to some extent; he was sought, but he sought no one. He seemed to have a special aversion for large gatherings, knowing that intelligence, subtlety, and wit, the qualities he most prized, vanish in them of their own accord. He never joined a party, and he would refuse on the plea of his age in a manner which plainly betrayed how little the excuse was worth. As this taste for solitude—whether natural or acquired—was seconded by a native touch of rather supercilious grandeur, which it was not in him to disguise, he was ere long regarded by the majority of his fellow-diners as an unsociable being, somewhat eccentric and contemptuous. At the same time, those who held this opinion were all the more flattered when he relaxed for a few minutes to treat them with less reserve.

One day, in torrents of rain, a hackney carriage drew up at the door of the hotel. The porter rushed out with his huge red umbrella to shelter the travellers as far as the awning over the steps, and two ladies got out of the vehicle. One might be about five and forty; she was a

handsome woman, though too stout, and in her movements and manner there was an affectation of briskness which betrayed a desire to be thought still young. The other, a quite bewitching figure in her water-proof wrap, with large and brilliant eyes behind her black veil, was a very young girl, who sprang up the steps in an instant without heeding the umbrella which the porter held up with officious respect, and then, shaking herself with the pretty flutter of a drenched bird, she cried out in her clear voice :

"Make haste, mamma. When once you are up here it is all over!"

M. de Joussieux happened to be standing under the awning, smoking a cigar.

"This is pretty weather, Mademoiselle," he remarked, "for coming to the sea-side."

The young lady flashed a look at him, one of those womanly glances which are a swift inquisition, and which melted into a smile.

"It is indeed, Monsieur," said she. "But the sea is so beautiful that not even the rain can spoil it."

Her voice had a tone of caressing sweetness which gave special grace to the simple reply; it was evident that the stranger had at first sight exerted his usual charm over her. The stout lady had by this time climbed the steps, and the mother and daughter disappeared in the doorway, surrounded by eager waiters, while the porter closed his umbrella.

"Who are the ladies?" asked M. de Joussieux of the hotel clerk, whose sleek oiled head had just made its appearance; and the clerk replied in the tone of a showman :

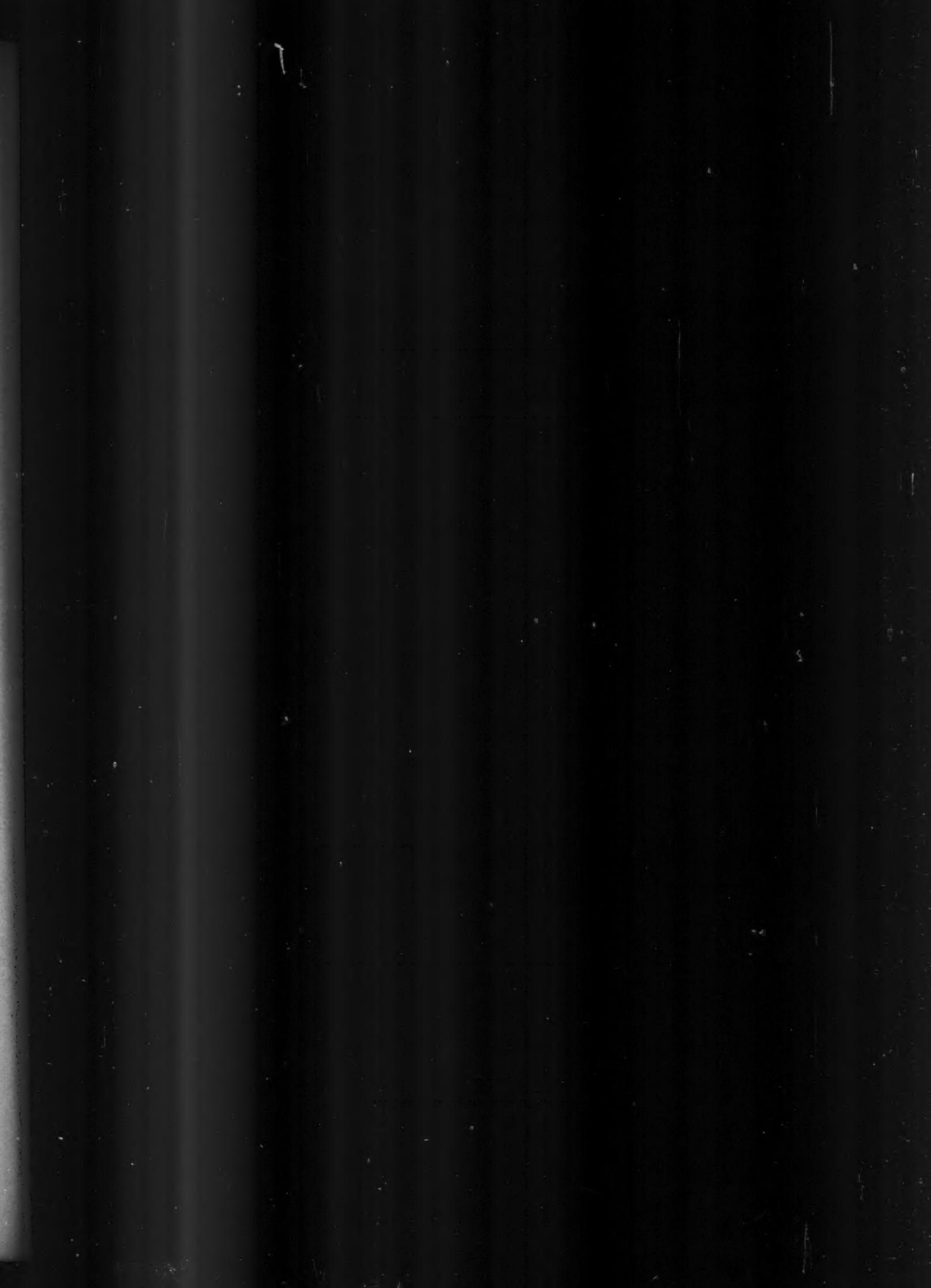
"Madame Davenne and Mademoiselle her daughter."

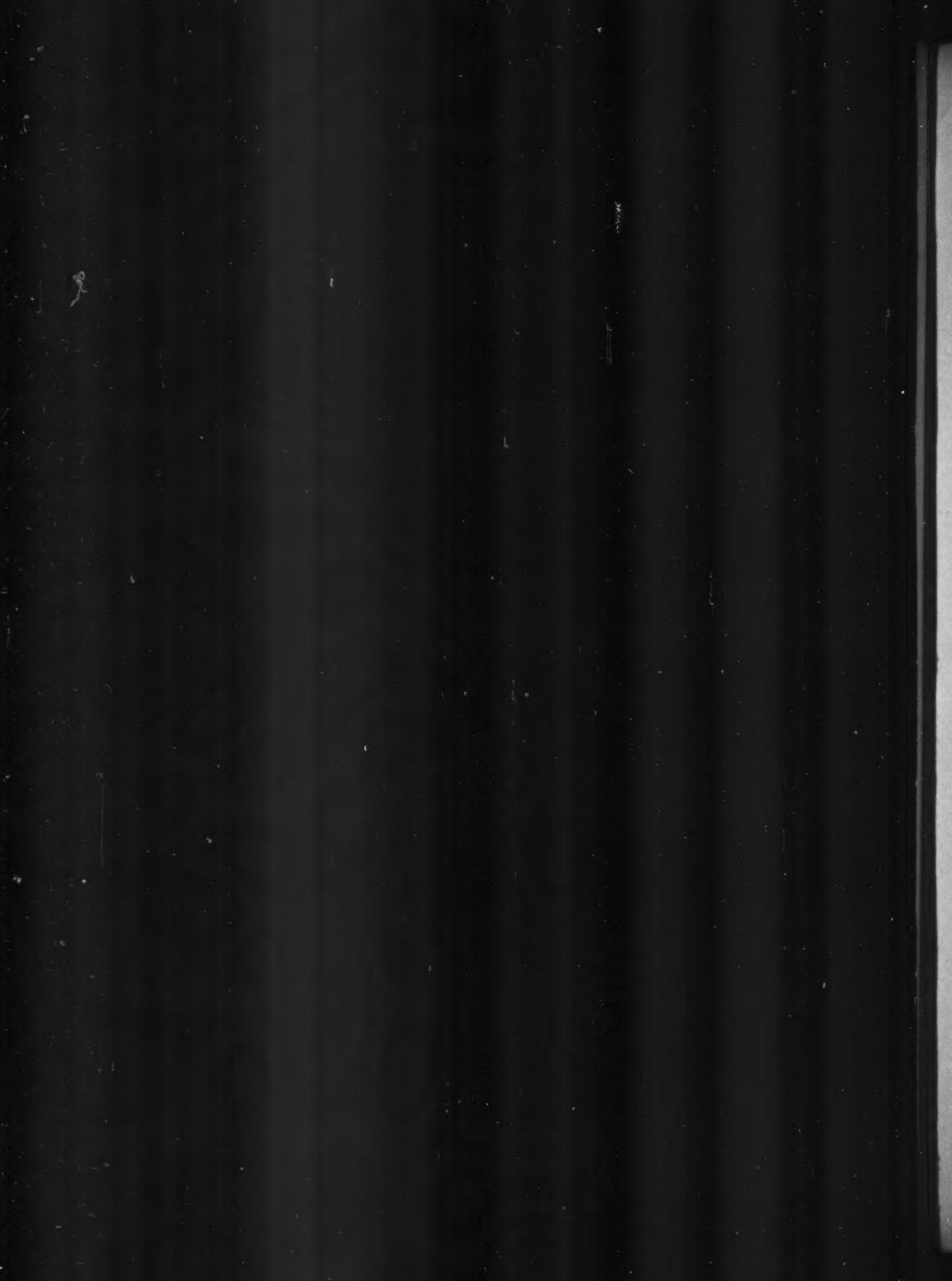
"Davenne? The Academician's wife?"

"I do not know, sir, the ladies have not been here before."

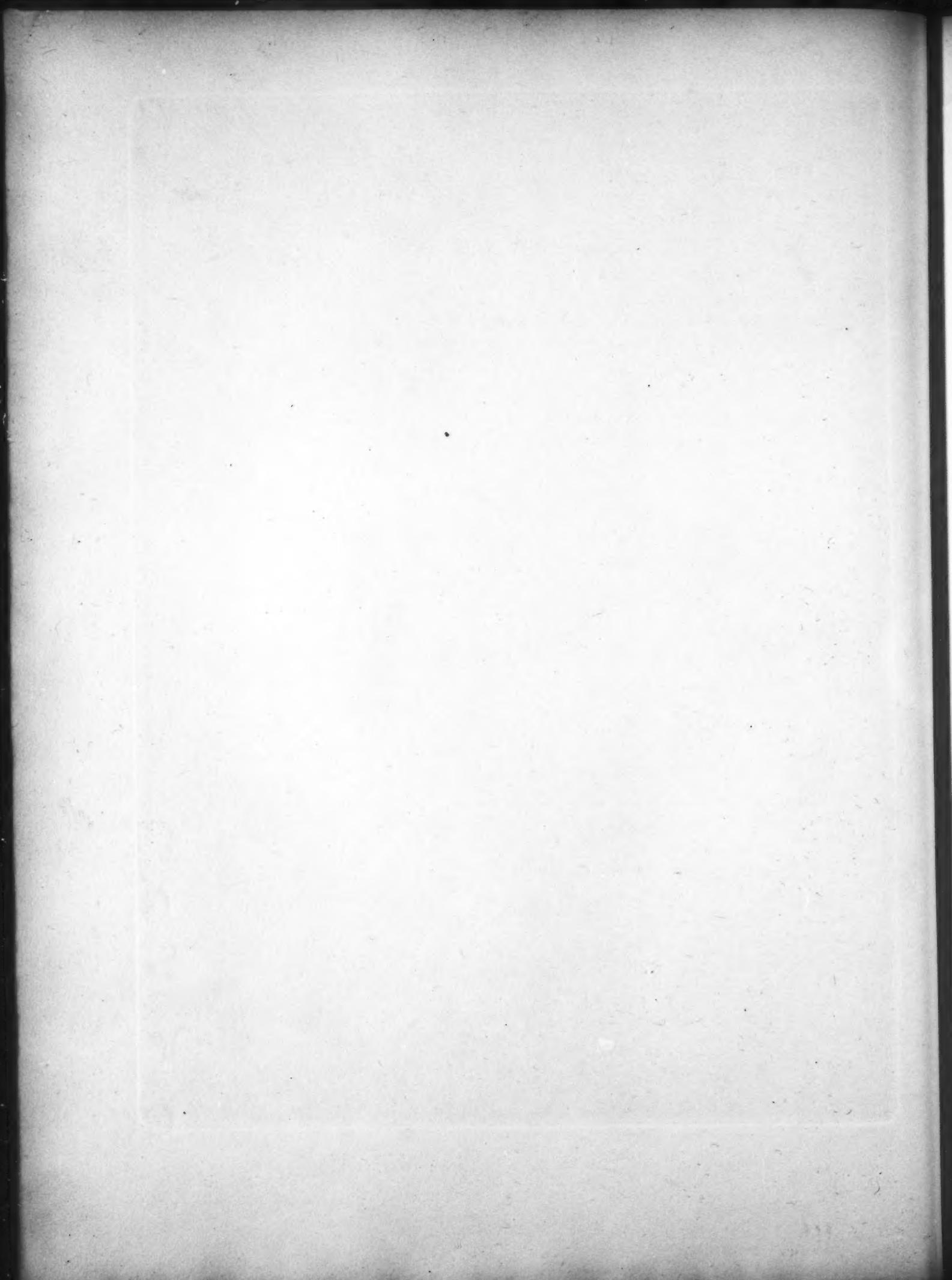
M. de Joussieux turned away, and finished his cigar while he gazed at the grey waters and the horizon washed out by the rain, then he withdrew to his room and sat down to his desk.

When he had covered a few sheets with fine, slender writing, delicate but firm, and hardly altered since the days when it stirred the hearts of so many readers, he rose, walked round the room two or three times,









and then went to the window, which he suddenly threw open with an impulse of curiosity. The two recent arrivals were again out in front, the mother on the top of the steps and under shelter, the daughter standing two steps lower, out in the rain which fell on her and was beginning to stream down her india-rubber cloak.

"Come, Claire, be reasonable," Madame Davenne was saying. "You surely do not mean to drag me out to the shore in such weather as this. And you cannot go alone. Besides, what do you want to do there? You see there is not even a cat out."

"But I must positively go to pay my respects to the sea, mamma. Only just good morning, I entreat you. And it is just because there is not even a cat to be seen that I can go alone. No one will run away with me."

With a shrug of disapproval and resignation Madame Davenne gave way, and Claire was off almost at a run.

What strange motive stirred M. de Joussieux? What he did, after watching the young girl, who, turning to the right, made for the cliffs and was soon no more than a dim ghost in the downpour, was to get into his mackintosh, turn the hood over his head, and set out by the same path. He found Claire Davenne at three minutes' walk from the hotel, standing at the end of the sea-wall, huddled in her cloak, off which the water was running like a river, and perfectly indifferent to the drenching she was getting. She struck him as small and quite charming, so small as to seem bewitchingly childlike, so charming that she attracted him irresistibly; nay, he was so fascinated that it was with conscious self-control that he said :

"You are somewhat rash, Mademoiselle; as you see, you and I are the only persons who have not been kept at bay by this deluge."

She turned round, rather startled at being thus addressed, recognized the speaker, and replied :

"I never was afraid of rain, Monsieur. In the country I always go out in all weathers. Papa, who to be sure never stirs, says it is good for the health."

"And to judge by your roses he is not wrong."

There was a short silence; then M. de Joussieux said, as he pointed to a lighter space on the horizon :

"However, this storm must presently clear the sky."

The girl glanced at him again with the same scrutinizing look as when she had first met him.

"We must hope so," said she. "But for my part I should be ready to put up with two or three days' rain, so long as mamma does not keep me indoors."

"Ah! at your age rain is a small matter."

She tossed her head with happy carelessness and a gay sparkle in her eyes.

"To tell you the truth, I am too much delighted to be at the sea to care much about the weather. Only it is very cold——" And she shivered. "I must walk on a little way."

She nodded to him with light dismissal, and jumped down from the sea-wall on to the beach.

M. de Joussieux turned on his heel. A touch of rheumatism in his left shoulder warned him to be prudent. Still he walked up and down the little parade for a few minutes. Claire was on her way to the cliffs; he could see her stoop now and then to pick up a shell no doubt, or a sea-weed, while the hollow voice of the ebbing tide wailed forth its griefs. Presently she vanished behind a jutting rib of black rock. The rain was diminishing, the bright patch was spreading, and soon the sky was seen brightly blue through a rent in the clouds. M. de Joussieux thought there was nothing to hinder the young girl from taking her walk, and he went in.

A few people were standing on the steps, doubting between their wish for a walk and their dislike of the wet underfoot. Among them was Madame Davenne, and with a bow he addressed her.

"I have just parted from your daughter, Madame; do you know she is very brave?"

The stout lady, eager and voluble, and by this time fully informed as to the name and dignity of the handsome old man she had noted on arriving, explained that this was the outcome of her husband's notions on

education, that she herself—having been very carefully brought up—was often uneasy, but that her daughter, who had been a sickly child, was on the whole the better for it.

"Yes," said M. de Joussieux, "she is the very picture of health, and there is that indescribable aroma of opening life about her which always bewitches us old folks."

Madame Davenne went through a little pantomime with her eyes and all her plump person, to convey her objection to the words "old folks;" then, with a sigh, she confessed that health was not everything, that her daughter, having been brought up like a boy, was just a little too independent : "She will submit to no one but her father, who never interferes with her. As for me, she does not listen to me, and I really am quite uneasy, Monsieur, when M. Davenne, who will scarcely ever leave his books and his Academy, sends us into the country by ourselves, as he insists on doing year after year." And so she ran on, boring M. de Joussieux by her prosy chatter, though he listened to her with unwonted patience. He had taken her measure; a common, almost a vulgar nature, a woman inappreciatively proud of her husband's position, which she dragged in at every moment; full of restless and trivial vanity, possessed in all probability by the vague and sordid ambitions of women of inferior birth, and perhaps by the mean and grasping spirit of such creatures—greedy of distinction, of money, and of showy connections. And while he let her talk on, answering now and then with a careless word, he, who so rarely troubled himself about others at all, was reflecting on the fate of the distinguished man of letters who had so imprudently bound himself for life to such a woman. He knew Armand Davenne but slightly, having met him occasionally in society, but he had a vivid image in his mind of that essentially French profile, not unlike that of Henri IV, refined by a look of weariness and frail health, by its melancholy spirituality, and by the polite indifference with which he met any praise of his last book. Thus, as he compared the few words spoken by Claire in their brief interview with Madame Davenne's flow of chatter, he understood all the singularities of the girl's ways. It was not that her father had spoiled her; he had above all emancipated her from her mother, an

excellent woman, no doubt, and quite irreproachable, but like a being of another genus, out of all harmony.

M. de Joussieux was still meditating, Madame Davenne still talking. Suddenly she ceased; a tall young man came towards her, and there was a little scene of rapturous recognition :

"What, M. Framery! Are you here? And we did not know it! When did you arrive? Are you staying at this hotel? Excuse me, Monsieur, but M. Framery is an old friend of the family."

M. de Joussieux bowed and moved away, and as he went he heard these words :

"And Claire will be so delighted to see you."

The first dinner-bell was ringing. Claire, coming in with a brisk step, shook hands warmly with Framery; then every one went in.

And evening gently closed on the dripping landscape, under the tender pale light of a dying sun round which the clouds were gathering like white winding-sheets.

* * *

The most robust souls, if by chance they are taken out of their usual groove of life, cannot escape the sense of loneliness. The enervating homesick feeling creeps over them, wraps them in the vague dissatisfaction which is, as it were, its very atmosphere, which gains on them every hour, and becomes a settled gloom; it lays them open to unexpected reactions, ripens unattainable desires, and prompts them to deeds utterly opposed to their past habits and principles. M. de Joussieux, for instance, was certainly not predisposed to melancholy. He, if any man, was one of those well-balanced natures, who, by the exercise of good intentions and good sense, can determine the resultant of two factors, self and the external force of circumstances, and submit to it unhesitatingly. But this evening, all through the long hours, he was tortured by new and indefinable sensations.

This began at dinner. Imprisoned excursionists, and bathers deprived of their plunge in the sea, after boring each other in little knots all day, found it a relief to assemble with a common interest; and after a few

laments over the weather, the whole long table cheered up with astonishing liveliness. A give and take of pleasantries went on over the dessert dishes—that mockery of dessert, the scanty dole of a table d'hôte—and the clatter of forks formed an accompaniment to easily provoked laughter. M. de Joussieux's right-hand neighbours were usually two old ladies whose conversation he could endure with a good grace, but it happened that they were dining in their room, so their seats were vacant and he was deserted on that side. On his left sat Framery of all men, and he talked incessantly to Madame Davenne and her daughter who were next beyond him. He evidently was an old acquaintance; their conversation was intimate, and he so effectually made himself a wall between them and his right-hand neighbour that he plainly had no intention of serving as a connecting link. So M. de Joussieux was reduced to eating his dinner in silence, and the light-hearted mirth on all sides made his isolation all the more melancholy.

After dinner a little dance was got up which was immediately a success, and which turned the drawing-room upside down. M. de Joussieux took refuge in the smoking-room, where five or six men were talking politics; but they uttered such preposterous absurdities with such imperturbable solemnity that he took up the newspapers and shut his ears to the sound of their conversation, stolid, dull, and flat as it was. The papers, however, were crammed with false reports of a squabble between the German Emperor and his Chancellor, and with cooked up articles on the necessity of "concentration," with M. Floquet for a nucleus. Meanwhile the rhythm of a waltz, and of shuffling feet over the polished floor, with a murmur of voices and laughter—sounds which are instinct with indescribable incitements—forced on M. de Joussieux's mind ideas widely unlike those he strove to take in: recollections of his youth, tinged with keener regret by the sudden, almost physical pang of its irrevocable flight; visions dimmed by time, which rose from the dead, and presently appeared in fairer outline and warmer hues against the dingy sheet of newspaper he held before him, on which he still saw flitting words, "revision," "radicalism," "Boulangism," "constitution." Then there was a new sensation; a tide of hot blood rushed through his arteries and mounted to his cheeks, a

gush of undying spring-tide, like a warm wind in midwinter bringing a thrill of comfort to the stripped and shivering trees.

M. de Joussieux threw aside his newspaper and went back to the drawing-room.

How good to behold were all these young creatures waltzing, and not one of them all reflected that the hours, as they flew, bore on thin wings these transient pleasures away with them into the past; or that one old man, alone now in the world, who was standing by and watching them with inscrutable eyes, had known more happiness, more joy, more savour in life, more love, than they, all of them put together; nay, and that then and there, a mere chance had rekindled the dead fires of his heart to scorching heat.

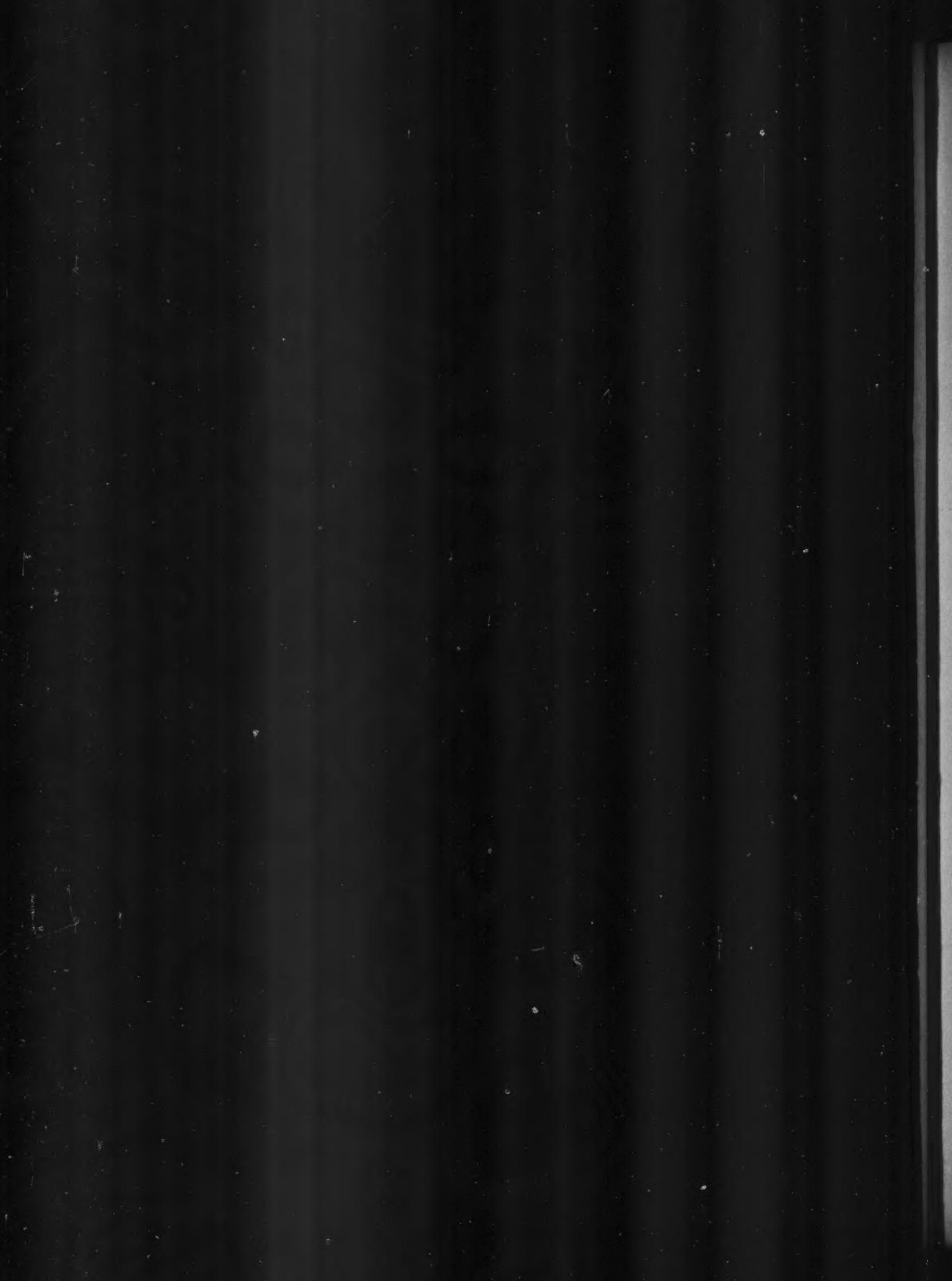
Mere chance?

M. de Joussieux at once found his way to Madame Davenne's side, and took a chair which, a moment after, he resigned to Claire. The dance was over; she came up rosy and panting, and accepted the seat with a little bow, a gesture of infinite grace.

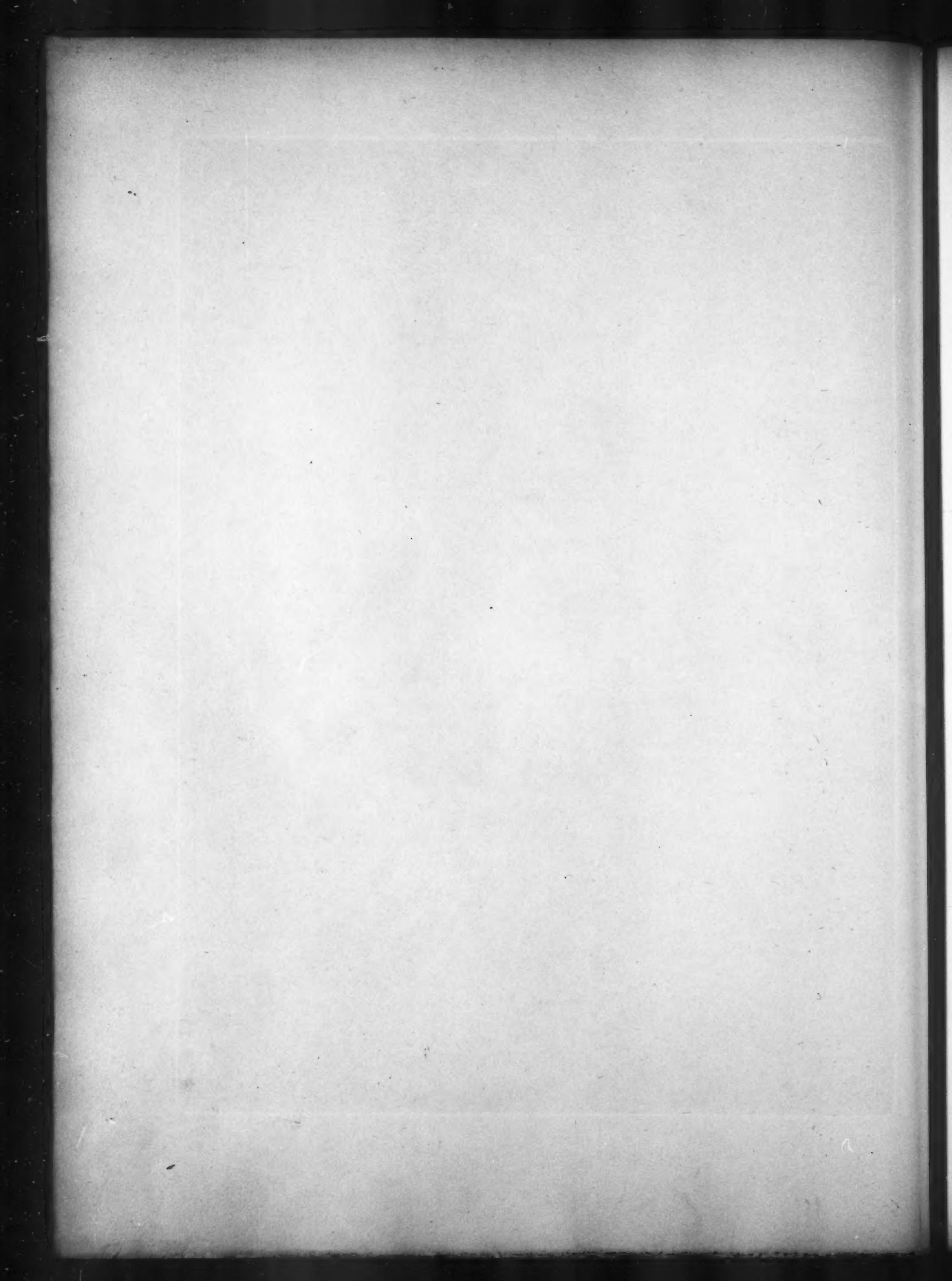
"Claire," said her mother, "it is very late; we are tired with travelling, we must be going—"

"No, no, mamma, not yet, I beg and pray—" and she was gone with Framery. They were a pretty couple, M. de Joussieux thought. "He loves her—She perhaps will love him. She will be his wife—They will be happy—" And the troubles of the future pair seemed to crowd upon his heart where all was over.

Madame Davenne was pouring out to him her complaints of young girls, who are never tired of dancing, who never think of the morrow! When Claire paused again her mother began once more; but she interrupted her: "No, no, one quadrille more. And you must dance it too, mamma. You shall dance with Monsieur Framery; and I will be your *vis-à-vis* with—" and she looked about her. "What a bore, I see no one who knows us." But her eyes met those of M. de Joussieux, and they were so expressive of her eager wish that he could not help smiling encouragement. With the bewitching and vehement impetus of a spoilt child she exclaimed:







"Allow me to ask you, Monsieur. I am sure you will be so very kind as to dance with me, as *vis-à-vis* to mamma."

Madame Davenne exclaimed apologetically :

"Claire, you crazy child! This is too much! Do you know who—"

But M. de Joussieux rose, still smiling, and gave the girl his arm.

Among the dancers there was a little stir of curiosity, a rustle of dresses, and whispering and covert smiles. Was this handsome old man, they wondered, a man so revered and so courted, going to make himself ridiculous—and what for?

M. de Joussieux had never been ridiculous, and he was not ridiculous now. He went through the quadrille as if he had danced no longer ago than last night. His movements were as precise and easy as those of a young man confident of himself, and knowing his part in the world so thoroughly that he plays it unconsciously. Between the figures, while all eyes were centred on him, he chatted with Claire Davenne, not seeming aware of the attention he excited, talking of the various subjects which are lightly touched upon in a ball-room, delighted with her gay and heedless prattle as she answered him, and fascinated by her happy, arch, black eyes beaming with the gratification of her feminine pride, despotic and relentless already. Towards the end the colour had risen to his cheeks and his breath came a little short; nothing more, no trace of fatigue; so that as he led his partner back to her seat a little murmur of admiration arose. If the whispers had not been very low, repressed by the deference due to his name, which, indeed his little freak had enhanced, he might have caught words to this effect :

"Who is the little baggage who has bewitched him?"

"Did he know her before, do you think?"

"No, he never set eyes on her till to-day."

"Oh! oh!"

* * *

But the acquaintance was made, and very effectually. M. de Joussieux henceforth was "tied to Madame Davenne's apron-strings," as ill-natured gossips put it, and he soon lost the graceful ease he had displayed in

the quadrille. He had too much worldly wisdom, indeed he was too clever a man and too well aware of his years, to flirt like a youngster with the delightful girl whose merest look enslaved him; he had too much tact, and heart, and pride to treat her as a child with senile flattery. Still, hampered by their disparity, and anxious to divert the curiosity which he felt fermenting around him, he fancied he could cast dust in folks' eyes by dancing attendance on Madame Davenne, whose gossip was intolerable to him; but he failed to disguise the nervous anxiety with which he noted every act and deed of Claire's. If she were absent, his eye wandered in search of her, his ear was on the alert for her footstep, he spoke at random, his hand or foot fidgeted with an impatient tap. If she went out, or if she was late in going out, he was waiting for her on the door-step, though affecting not to heed her movements, and screened by a newspaper which he was not reading, or gazing with unheeding eye on the landscape before him. Every one knew his secret. "Monsieur de Joussieux is in love," said one and another twenty times a day, not without an infusion of jealous spite. He was criticised; some dared to speak of "men who cannot grow old with a good grace;" others, on the contrary, took his part, declaring that so handsome a man had still a right to fall in love; but all were agreed in laughing at so strange a match, for they were all sure it would end in marriage, M. de Joussieux being a splendid alliance for a girl with no name and no great fortune. And Madame Davenne, eager to realise this anticipation, treated him with motherly familiarity, while she turned a very cold shoulder on Framery.

As for M. de Joussieux, he felt all this in the air, and it was misery to him. What! had he five years since renounced success and fame, active work, nay, and life itself, to the end that none of his admirers should look on at his decay; and now he lacked courage to extirpate this passion, at an age when love is the supremely ridiculous thing? And he suffered all the more acutely because he had, in truth, small hope. His clear-sightedness, unimpaired by his passion, showed him plainly that, in spite of his evergreen vigour, his fine presence, and the advantages he could offer, he could never beguile the heart or the fancy of so simple and undesigning a girl as Claire into sacrificing her youth to secure a

brilliant future; and he would have accepted even this compromise, though the mere thought of it was a stab to his pride. She was too genuinely a girl, loving pleasure, excursions, dances, bathing, the sea, and dress; loving all that is good in life; loving love too, no doubt, and awaiting its advent, not in the form of an old man, however illustrious and rich, but in the guise of a handsome youth—like Framery.

Yes, that name undoubtedly was often in her day-dreams, and this added the sting of jealousy to M. de Joussieux's bitterness. It was all the keener because he could not fail to appreciate his rival's supreme advantages; he was handsome, elegant, a brilliant talker, nay, and famous too, for two novels by Framery were everywhere read, discussed, and admired.

There was positively no rivalry. Framery was always respectful, made way for him on all occasions, and showed the utmost consideration and care for the enemy who could not help hating him; and this courtesy crushed M. de Joussieux more than any contempt would have done. Before long his fears were certainty—a certainty which he thrust away from him, which he did his best to regard as a mere suspicion, but which forced itself upon him whenever he observed Claire with the truth in her eyes. Women have, in fact, a secret soul which they allow none to see but the man they love; and even Claire's charm was enhanced as soon as Framery came near her. She was actually prettier, she lived faster, as if the intense glow of feeling which was kindled within her lighted her through with divine radiance, and fired her glance with the irresistible spark of love. And as they walked side by side on the moist sand left bare by the low tide, or along the paths that zigzag up the cliffs, Madame Davenne and M. de Joussieux following them, they went on wings, light and airy beings wrapt in a dream, finding mystical meanings in the nothings they said to each other, above the earth as it were, and borne on heavenly airs which blew for them alone.

* * *

At this stage a signal change came over M. de Joussieux. Reserved as he had hitherto been, and jealously eager to repel all importunate

civility, he almost suddenly became familiar, and sought, without distinction, the society which he had hitherto avoided. Was this a scheme of tactics, intended to screen the attentions he paid to Madame Davenne and Claire under a semblance of general sociability? Or was it a natural craving for effusiveness, a desire to talk of Claire, and to hear her mentioned when she was out of sight? At any rate it was a mistake; those to whom he now made advances soon chilled him by their affectation of sympathy and indiscreet inquisitiveness, so that he found himself obliged to beat a retreat, and re-assert, with some little difficulty, his right of keeping his own counsel. I, however, was so fortunate as not to have disgusted him, and I remained in his confidence.

I should find it impossible to report all his conversations, though they have left a deep impression on my mind. I fancy I can hear his fine deep voice, lost now and then in the sound of the waves; I can see him, upright, stalwart, and thin, wrapped in his waterproof—for still it rained and still it was cold—pacing the shore with his hand in my arm, his step as springy as my own, and talking with ironical sadness of this undreamed-of renewal of his youth which had revived love in his heart; laughing at that love itself, and yet cherishing it with jealous care, at once happy and wretched, proud and ashamed of this passion out of due season, which he considered ridiculous, and yet which warmed his heart and brain with the glow of a brighter time.

At first he did not confide in me on this subject; M. de Joussieux began with diplomatic cunning, by discussing our other fellow-diners, as if he took a real interest in those commonplace empty-headed people, indifferent in every sense, in their petty concerns and noisy bustle, and only at last came to speak of the one person he cared about. I let him alone, sometimes smoothing the way by being the first to mention the name he craved to hear. Once or twice this seemed to thwart him; no doubt he suspected me of the sort of contemptuous pity which young folks feel for old men's follies; he would change the subject, not abruptly as though he were offended, but with cautious circumspectness. But then he found out, I suppose, that I did not think him ridiculous, and would respond to my advances with a genial smile; till at length he

cast off all disguise, and one day he opened his heart to me with entire frankness.

We had set out at an early hour in the afternoon, four of us, on horseback; Claire Davenne, M. de Joussieux, Framery, and I. When we started he was riding with Claire; I rode in front with Framery. This order of march, which Madame Davenne highly approved, was, thanks to me, observed all through the first half of the expedition; I had led the way, and Framery had no choice but to follow; then, under the plea that the long road between hedges was quite devoid of interest, as soon as I heard our two companions gaining on us I put my horse to a faster trot. My little manœuvre was perfectly successful, and I found my reward in the brilliant high spirits—I might say the happiness—of M. de Joussieux during a brief halt at a roadside inn, where they brought us some capital sparkling cider. On the way back the order was different; we started four abreast, Claire between M. de Joussieux and Framery, by whom I again rode. Suddenly, at a spot where the road became very narrow before opening out on to the shore, by which we were to return, Claire and Framery, taking advantage of this chance, both gave the reins to their horses and led the way. I fancy they had exchanged a glance of intelligence, but I may be wrong; they understood each other well enough by this time for the manœuvre to have been spontaneously executed, without any premeditation. M. de Joussieux smiled a heart-broken smile, and his good spirits fell dead.

We went on our way in silence. I tried two or three times to start a conversation; he replied in monosyllables. Our two companions went ahead, five hundred yards or so in front of us, darker shades against the sullen sky. A few yards below us the sea was tumbling with its monotonous moan; now and again a gull swept across like a flash of silver light. Suddenly I noticed that Claire and Framery were slackening their speed. I was about to take advantage of this, and with a sign to M. de Joussieux, I shook the bridle, but he checked me, raising his hand :

"No," he said, "it is of no use." And he turned away to swallow down the feelings which were choking him.

The next moment, however, he looked in my face with very gentle, kind eyes—an expression I had not seen in them before; and he began talking with entire unreserve, laying his heart bare to me, confessing for the first time even to himself perhaps—who knows?—all that was stirring within him.

"Yes, I love her. It is ridiculous, I know—it is humiliating—I am ashamed of it. But how can I help it if my heart will not grow old? Such adventures should only come upon men who have not lived their lives, just to make them regret their wasted prime; but I, who have had my share of loving, and have had so large a share of joy in love—I ought to know that such things are of the past. I cannot help it, I feel as if I had never loved before as I love now. Well; the delights of the past count for nothing; they are dead, and my heart craves others. You must understand that I am not being made a fool of; I know that she does not love me, and that she does love that young fellow. It is quite natural; he is young and handsome; she is young and lovely. They gravitate to each other by the eternal law of attraction. I know it; I ought to go away and spoil the play for the table d'hôte audience who watch me and laugh at me. That would be common sense and obvious dignity. Not I. I had courage enough to retire from life when I felt it wise. I have not enough to wrench myself from this torture which I hug. For I must tell you that I revel in this devotion which can bring me nothing but disappointment. It seems to me a resurrection of the dust of all my dead loves, and if all the world were to laugh at it, I should not think it laughable. To me it is sacred."

He spoke at intervals for some time in short sentences interrupted by long pauses, to the accompaniment of the steady trot of the horses.

What could I say? I listened and made no reply. And then, after passing a long landscape of low sand-hills, we saw the village; presently the hotel was in sight, with Claire and Framery dismounting. Madame Davenne's gestures as she received her daughter were indicative of displeasure; she was annoyed, no doubt, and perhaps scolding her for having altered the order of the cavalcade; but when we arrived the lady met us with obsequious politeness.

From that time forth not a day passed that M. de Joussieux did not come to me to talk about Claire. How well he loved her! If she had but known!

An old man's love is thought meanly of, it is an insult, a stain on the lady of his devotion. But never did the virgin heart of a youth confessing its first love betray more delicate and innocent tenderness; no poet of twenty could have found fresher words to clothe the freshness of his feelings. I was altogether charmed and bewitched; and I asked myself whether this man, with his youthful heart in spite of his white hairs, still so full of life after having lived so long, would not make this young creature he adored happier than that other admirer who loved her as he might have loved any girl? But no doubts ever crossed Claire's mind; she went the way youth led her, to the fate whither the winds carried her.

* * *

Whether it was in consequence of my friendship for M. de Joussieux, I know not, but I could not take to Framery. Before making his acquaintance I had not much liked his books; their affectations annoyed me, and they seemed to me to betray a certain arid coldness of heart. Nor did I like him any better when I knew him. He was angular, he gave himself airs, he was puffed up with insufferable, touchy, and grasping vanity. Perhaps I was unjust in ascribing to him a calculating love of money. Claire Davenne, though she had no great fortune, was a good match, and a marriage with her offered an exceptionally good position to a man of letters; the son-in-law of Armand Davenne—the profound, and yet popular philosopher, who had solved the difficult problem of being alike esteemed by learned men and liked by men of the world—the son-in-law of Armand Davenne, being somebody on his own account to start with, would find every obstacle removed from his path. And although Claire was charming enough to be truly loved, with no undercurrent of self-interest, I could not believe that Framery loved her as M. de Joussieux did. Can a man love when his only aim is to get on? Does not the love of success tap the spring of the other love? Besides, love is a luxury, and how

could Framery in the midst of his active career—even here by the sea-side he was working—find leisure to indulge in this luxury? So, on the whole, believing him to be ambitious and calculating, I avoided him.

He, on the contrary, courted me. What for? Did he hope to catch in the air some of the secrets he may have supposed me to know? Or was a simpler explanation to be found in a genuine crisis of feeling, a disinterested wish to have a friend; could he find no one among the herd of visitors who could play the part more to his mind? They were such a frivolous set, so full of their own amusements, so incapable of reserve, of reflection, of poetic feeling; living in a horde and possessed with no idea but that of escaping from their own inherent vacuity by the commonplace intercourse of chance acquaintanceship. It was true; I was the only man to whom Framery could turn, if indeed he had anything to say.

I could not avoid him, and I am a born confidant. However averse I might be to being taken into his intimacy, I was fated to hear his confession.

He did not proceed by gradual stages as M. de Joussieux had done, like a man who is modest over his secrets. He seized upon me as a brother author and younger than himself; very soon he styled me his friend, tried to captivate me by praising my writings, and forthwith read out his heart to me without questioning for a moment the keen interest I must take in it.

An arid heart; in that I was not mistaken. A smothered violin played on by an intelligent will which, however, could only bring out a thin dull tone; a poor instrument in the hands of a skilled performer. Again and again I had to sit through speeches on this pattern :

"No, my dear fellow, I am not happy; I have wasted my life. My success, which is now beginning, seems to you enviable, I daresay; but you know not what it has cost me. What I am I have made myself by sheer force of will, and such willing is exhausting. Believe me, there is nothing on earth so precious as the gift we so soon lose of shedding real tears. Now, I am past thirty, I am approaching the age which the poet calls the half-way house of life, and I am weary; and I

should feel empty, desperately empty, if this fresh fount of feeling had not restored my strength somewhat. Oh! if I might but give myself up to it without reserve! Have you read our messmate's book, *Pierre de Beuil?*"

"Of course I have; who has not? It is a masterpiece."

"A masterpiece? That is saying a great deal! No, it is not a masterpiece; it is simply a book written by a young man imbued with the spirit of his time, and who loved once for all. Ah! love stories are the only books that will live for ever! I have dreamed of writing a love story, but I never could; I do not love!"

"What! You do not love. Did you not just now say—"

"Oh, yes; I do my best to love. But how can I tell? He is the man who really loves, your friend, M. de Joussieux. I need some stimulant, like a *blaseé* appetite. Now, if he were really a rival, if I could be jealous of him, if he were not so utterly past the age when a man can hope to be loved—"

"If being young in heart were all that is needed!—He is a younger man than you or I, I tell you, and carries within him treasures of tenderness that might produce another *Pierre de Beuil*."

"It is a pity they should be so effectually hidden under his grey hairs. It would take very little, I assure you, to release me from myself, and then I should lapse into the commonplace of life—a life of calm and steady affection, such as I have never known. And this, perhaps, is my one opportunity, a chance which once gone may never return—"

Well, since Framery insisted on my being his confessor, why should I shirk the part? It is always a queer experience, as we say in our literary slang, to get at the heart of a man; and though he annoyed me, he interested me. So I asked him point-blank : "Then you are set on loving the woman you make your wife?"

He looked at me. "Certainly," he said, "I mean to love her, and be quite sure that I love her. Marriage without love is a desilement."

He felt that I did not quite believe him, and he went on :

"Oh, do not misunderstand me. I do not mean that I would marry any woman I might fall in love with. No, my unworldliness does not

carry me so far as that; I should never make a foolish marriage. But I would never marry any girl I did not love. You perceive the delicate distinction?"

"I believe so. If I understand you rightly, you have no prejudice against marriage, and will make up your mind to the plunge when you meet with a young lady who shall realize all the conditions of fortune, position, *et cætera*, which you consider necessary, and with whom you are at the same time thoroughly in love."

"Just so!"

"The black tulip—the blue dahlia—"

"Not at all, since I have almost reached that consummation. There are moments when I feel as if I had quite reached it. At this minute, for instance, if I were to meet Madame Davenne, I am quite capable of proposing to her for her daughter's hand."

"And you would repent within a quarter of an hour."

"That is what I am afraid of. That is what checks me."

"Ah, my dear fellow, it is easier for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven than for a cold-hearted man to enter into the kingdom of Love!"

"Nay, nay, I beg your pardon. I am not cold-hearted, far from it—"

And he was about to explain to me for the tenth time that he was susceptible of any tender sentiment. But Claire had just come out on the steps, her white dress looped up with a simple sash of red ribbon which was amazingly becoming to her fresh, dark complexion, and he left me, to continue the conversation with her, no doubt. I remained behind, much saddened and provoked by the irony of nature, which puts old hearts into young bodies to cheat women who can be taken in by the colour of a man's hair.

* * *

I ought here to describe all the manœuvring of Madame Davenne. Her dense ambition having been fired by visions of un hoped-for splendour, she did her utmost to discard Framery for the sake of M. de Joussieux.

And I ought no less to describe the fading spirits of Claire, now at open war with her mother; the self-willed frown that furrowed her brow, the change in her manner, which became more assertive, and the fevered glow of a nascent passion in her eyes. A little drama was being played out by these four persons whom the opportunities of hotel life had thrown together; the complications of the plot were obvious to every one and were commented on by all. M. de Joussieux's chances, upheld by the mother, Framery's, with the daughter on his side, were openly discussed with odious smiles. The elder man's anxiety and nervousness, the young lover's stolid coldness, the flashing eyes and evident agitation of *la petite* were the subject of observation.

All the tumult of these three souls was thrown, as it were, for fodder to the idle curiosity of the vulgar watering-place public immured by the ceaseless rain; and sheer dulness having debased indifference into malice, almost into spite, it feasted with ruthless and merciless relish on the torture it could imagine.

In spite of my own more sympathetic interest in the little drama, I was rather tired sometimes of my part of confidant to both sides, for it won me the selfish advances of the most inquisitive. However, I was destined to play it on a still larger scale. One day, among my letters, I found a note in these terms :

"Mademoiselle Claire Davenne begs Monsieur X..., to be so good as to go to-morrow morning by eight o'clock into the hotel garden, and wait for her under the great cedar. She is anxious to speak with him *concerning a friend of his, to whom he may do an important service.*"

I at once perceived that my intimacy with the two rivals was about further to involve me in the secrets of a third person. I had a strangely mixed feeling of vexation and satisfaction; of vexation, because, though I had not the very smallest wish to write my name third on the list of the young lady's admirers, it is always humiliating to be treated as a perfectly safe neutral; of satisfaction, because it is delightful to find oneself mixed up in the love affairs of a pretty girl, to listen to her avowals, even though they are meant for another, and to watch as an outsider the sweet impulses of her soul. At the same time, I own that I thought this a

rather bold step, and I lost myself in conjectures as to the circumstances which could have induced her to write to me.

My curiosity was at a high pitch when I went to the appointed spot five minutes before the hour. At the end of those five minutes Mademoiselle Davenne joined me, walking with a brisk, determined step. She held out her hand, which shook a little. She gave me one look—a tremendous look, one of those flashes into which a woman concentrates a world—then she looked away, fixing her eyes before her as if set on vacancy, and we walked on together through the side-walks.

"You were greatly surprised, no doubt, Monsieur, at receiving my note; but I am in a great difficulty, and I thought—I thought I might ask you to help me. No one else can; and being, as you are, M. de Joussieux's friend—"

I replied in a rather confused sentence to the effect that, though I was entirely at her service, I would point out to her that my friendship with M. de Joussieux was of too recent date to give me any right to interfere in his concerns.

She reflected a moment in silence, and the involuntary and puzzling lines on her brow deepened; then with a pretty impulse of wilful resolve she went on :

"Never mind! I will tell you all about it. Then you can judge for yourself what you must do. You know, I suppose, that your friend has proposed for me to my mother?"

I started with amazement. For two days M. de Joussieux had kept apart; he struck me as being more nervous and preoccupied than usual; but such a step as Mademoiselle spoke of was so completely in contradiction to everything he had hitherto said to me that, like a simpleton, I could not help exclaiming :

"Are you sure of that?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly sure. Then you know nothing of it? He did not dare to tell you. Now, is it not disgusting at his age?"

She spoke with rising indignation. I attempted a deprecating gesture. But she went on :

"What does he take me for? He must know that I could not love

him! A girl of twenty does not fall in love with an old man! No one ever heard of such a thing—surely? Well then—”

I was, I own, in a great dilemma. I should have found it hard to suggest a few words of excuse for M. de Joussieux's proceeding, after his hitherto sober judgment of the situation. Fortunately, a few sketchy gestures of apology were all that were required of me. The young lady gave me no time for speech, but went on with an eager flow which betrayed her excited state of mind :

“The serious part of the matter is that my mother is inclined to take M. de Joussieux's part. She preached at me all last evening. You could never believe how many advantages she discovers in the match. A good name, a fine fortune, a husband—oh, Monsieur, is the world so hateful?—a husband who cannot have long to live. Yes, I assure you, my mother said that; not in so many words, of course, but in covert hints. Just think! Can there be any greater joy in store than to be left a widow at five-and-twenty perhaps, with a fine name and plenty of money? Is not that prospect worth some little sacrifice?—And what can I do? She has written to my father. I know exactly what he will say. At first he will take my part, and then he will give way for the sake of peace. I shall stand out; yes, with all my might! But after all, I shall be but one against the world. Still, I will never say yes, never! And what will be the end of it all?”

“Your fears, Mademoiselle, arise from your not knowing M. de Joussieux; you judge him wrongly, you are mistaken.”

She evidently misunderstood my meaning, for she cried out :

“Oh!”—

But I hastened to explain myself :

“M. de Joussieux is above all things a true gentleman. He may have been misled by passion—for he loves you, Mademoiselle; he loves you so well, that such a love, even though it may not be returned, can offend no woman. He loves you, I venture to declare, well enough to prefer your happiness to his own, and to withdraw his suit the moment he understands that it distresses you.”

The girl's face cleared, and she smiled :

"I almost hoped it," she said. "I trusted that you might say so. And I thought—that perhaps—you would consent to undertake—to explain to him—"

She did not end her sentence but fixed her large eyes on my face with a look of infinitely sweet entreaty. At that moment I could gladly have declared myself ready to do anything and everything for her, that I would walk into the fire with joy to save her the shadow of a sorrow; but such gusts of enthusiasm are brief with me. Reason soon got the upper hand again.

"As I said before, Mademoiselle, the kind feeling which M. de Jous sieux has shown me during the few days of our acquaintance gives me no right to offer him advice, nor even a warning hint in so delicate a matter. But why should you not tell him yourself quite plainly what you wish him to know?"

"I never thought of such a thing. Besides, how do you suppose I can do it? I might write, perhaps?"

"If you like; but I think it would be better to speak."

"Speak! That will be very difficult—and I should hurt him, I am afraid."

"Of that there can be no doubt; but you might at the same time soften the blow. The hand we love is the only one that can ease the wound it gives."

There was a moment's silence, then she said :

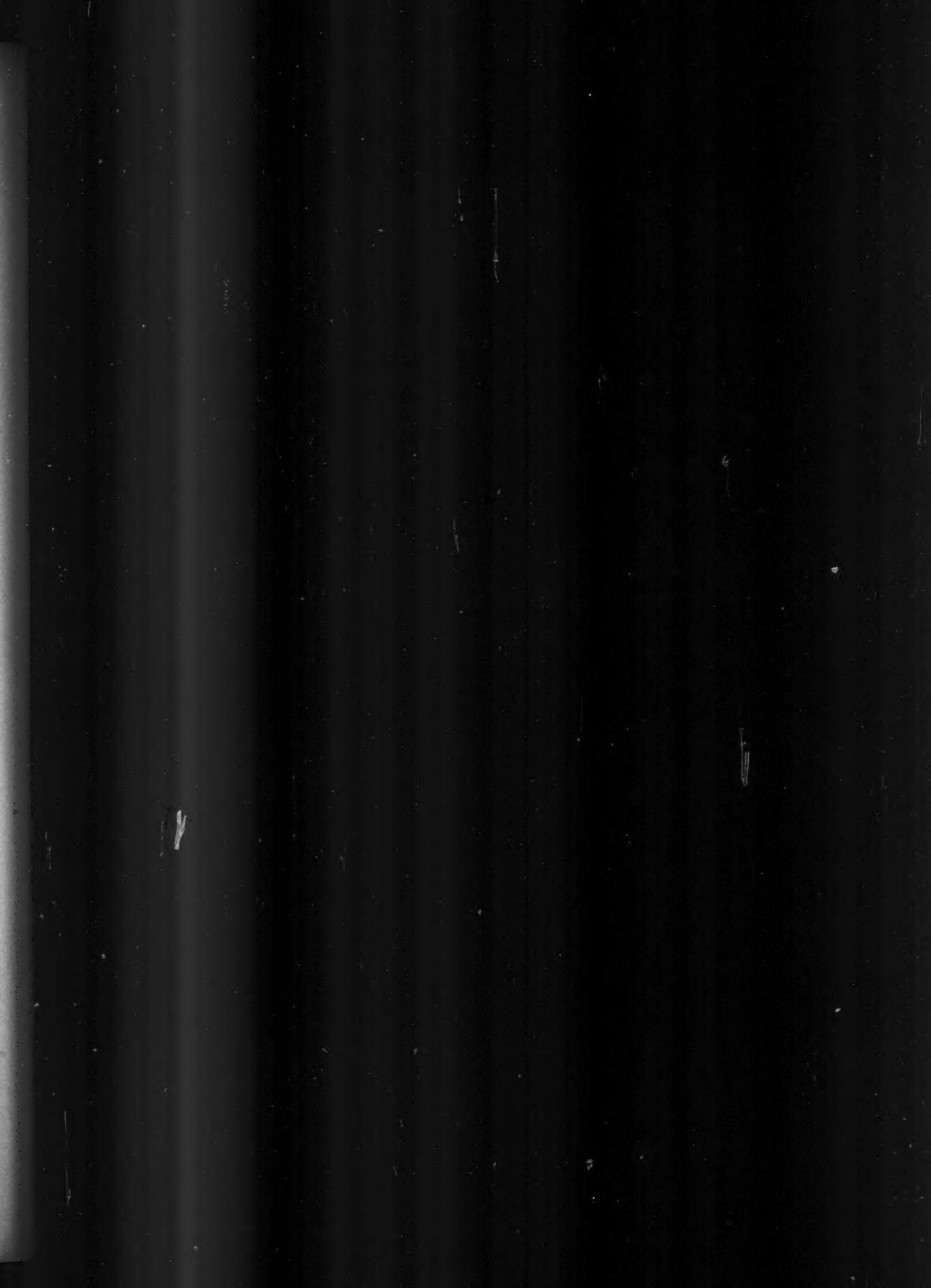
"I will think it over, Monsieur. But I think your advice is good."

She held out her hand, then vanished with a glance of farewell.

I stayed dreaming in the garden, telling myself all sorts of wise platitudes; that love, like madness, is contagious; that lovers are to be shunned as much as maniacs; too close a familiarity with one or the other leads to the loss of some of one's heart or of one's reason.

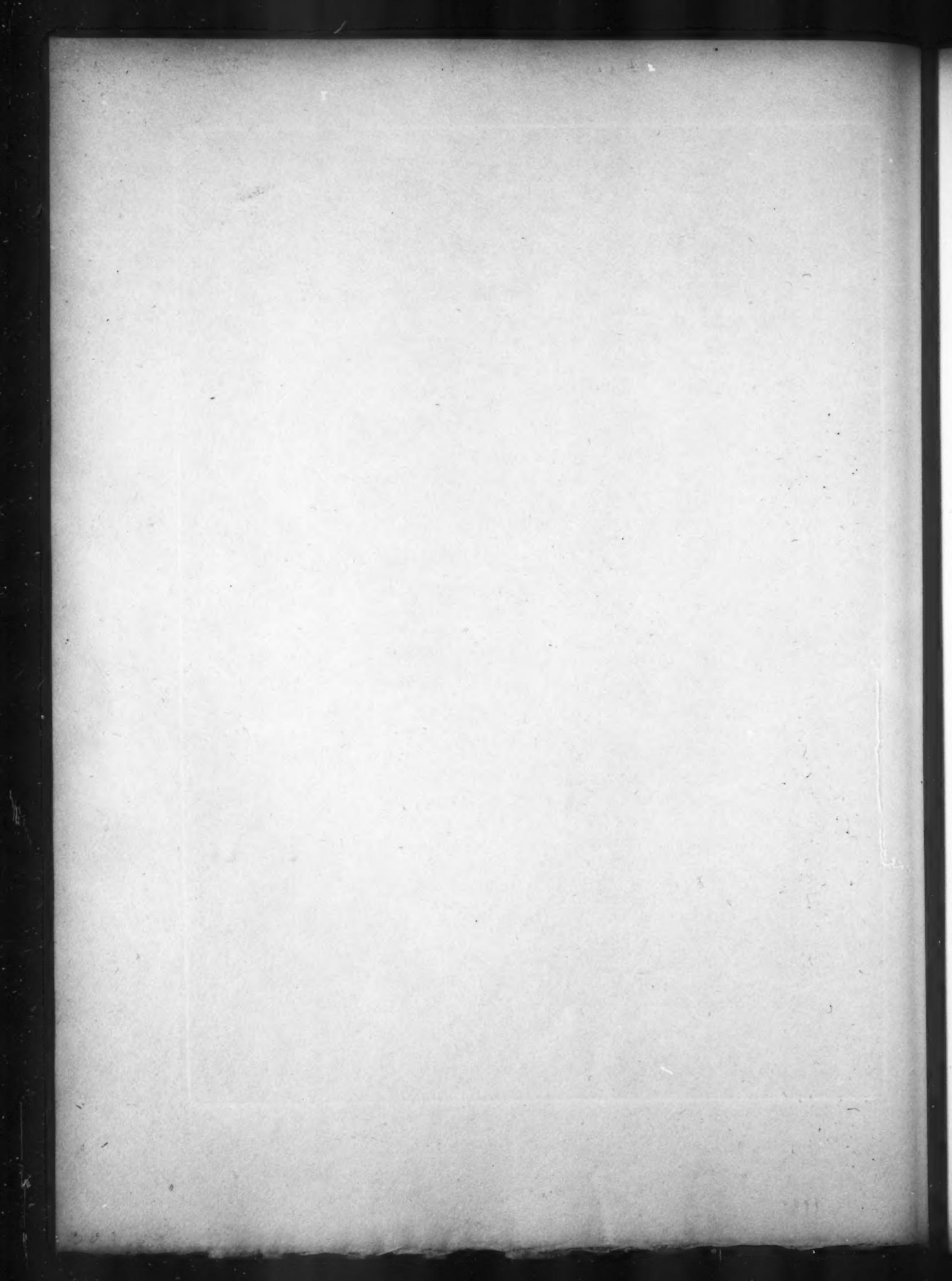
* * *

That evening, by a strange chance, was fine. The shore was crowded. Just as I was quitting the hotel to join the promenade, Framery came up to me, took my arm, and began to talk of literary matters. I listened









with but half an ear to my companion's theories, while he talked by fits and starts, and was almost as absent-minded as I was; he was evidently trying to work off some excitement in a flow of words. In a minute or two I caught sight of Claire walking with M. de Joussieux, a few yards ahead of us. Framery saw them, too, and he, like me, was aware of what was going on between them, for I felt his hand clench slightly on my arm. However, he went on with what he was saying; he had the talk all to himself.

At the end of the sea-wall they turned about and faced us; I also wanted to turn, as was discreet; but Framery pushed on, and we passed them. A hasty glance showed me that Claire was excited, flushed, and eager; M. de Joussieux very pale and downcast. He was speaking; I saw his lips moving. He did not see us; but Claire and Framery exchanged a swift look. Framery had ceased talking; his hand lay heavy on my arm and I fancied his breath came quickly. But he recovered himself, and then, giving up all attempt to conceal his feelings, he said :

"It is all very well; but if M. de Joussieux were a quarter of a century younger he could make me very miserable!"

To this I made no answer, but a minute or two later I remarked that there was a splendid sunset. We were then in front of the hotel.

"Yes, but it is very cold," said Framery. "I shall go in for an overcoat—*Au revoir*—" and he vanished.

I sat down on a wooden bench. Evening was closing in. The promenaders were returning in parties. I saw M. de Joussieux and Claire, who paced the little parade from end to end three or four times more. They faded into shades, every moment less distinct in the growing darkness. Suddenly I saw them stop at some little distance from where I sat. M. de Joussieux held the girl's hand, and she offered him her forehead to kiss; then they parted. Mademoiselle Davenne returned to the hotel; he was left alone.

I had no hesitation in joining him. He was standing still, his head drooping, his arms folded, in an attitude of extreme dejection; large tears stood on his cheeks. He took my hand very affectionately.

"It is a sweet soul," he said, "so candid and pure! And do you

know what it is that drives me to despair? It is not so much that she does not love me; I did not expect that, and I ought to have spared myself the last humiliation of a step which I knew was in vain. It is that she loves him—that young fellow, who is older than I am—who will make her wretched."

He had taken my arm, as Framery had done before, and we slowly wandered along the shore. It was deserted and voiceless, for the hour was late. The tide was out; the wailing of the sea was a far away murmur. We neither of us spoke; I could guess what my companion's thoughts were, and he could feel how warm was my sympathy, though I did not express it in words.

He was the first to speak : "This time I must put an end to it; I shall go to-morrow. I have made an exhibition of myself too long already. To have been so weak!"

And with an ironical and heart-broken smile he added :

"Well, the play is over!"

ÉDOUARD ROD.





THE SEAMY SIDE OF HISTORY

I. — THE LANDING FROM ELBA.

Singularly strong and lively was the generation which came into being between 1793 and 1803. It was, to put it neatly, the child of its own works. In the extinction which national education underwent in France from the destruction of the old Academic *régime* by the “Constituent Assembly” till the foundation of the University by the Emperor, every man had to be his own teacher. Those who became soldiers had no time; hence the number of illiterate persons among the heroes of the Republic and the Empire. Those who were kept at home by civil or municipal duties were better off in this respect. My father, who had a brother with the colours, was amongst these lucky ones.

He—whom I knew as a man of most varied and wide reading, a good classical scholar, almost a polyglot, a devoted lover of books, and a competent writer on administrative law,—had had no other schooling than that for his first examination, under a neighbouring abbé. The rest he owed to nobody but himself. He acquired it slowly, in toilsome evenings after his official work was done, at a time when government officials were permanently at

their posts, not only because railways did not exist, but because a civilian's career still implied an industry which has long since gone out of fashion in this country.

* * *

While still quite young my father found himself concerned in one of the great events of this century.

Born at Solliès-Pont in the Var, his precocious intelligence attracted the attention of M. Leroy, an ex-tribune, then prefect of this department of the Empire. M. Leroy summoned him to his side at Draguignan, and made him his private secretary. When Napoleon fell M. Leroy retired, commanding my father to his successor, who could not have done without him. The new prefect was called the Comte de Bouthilier. He had been one of the *émigrés*, had been struck out of that list under the Empire, and appointed by the Emperor sub-prefect of Minden, a department of the Upper Ems, which had been conquered and reunited to France. The government of the Restoration in giving him the place at Draguignan did not dream that it was then the most dangerous in the whole kingdom.

In November, 1814, M. de Bouthilier went with my father on a sort of tour of inspection in the *arrondissement* of Grasse. Had he at that moment a first presentiment, as it were, of the event of which a few months later that district was to be the scene? Certain it is that the last places he visited in his round were Antibes, the St. Marguerite Isles, Cannes, and the Gulf of Juan. The regiment of regulars in garrison at Antibes was commanded at that time by Colonel Poudret de Civrai who had been aide-de-camp to Bernadotte. He was replaced next year by Colonel Cunéo d'Ornano.

From this point I let my father speak.

"The winter of 1814-15," he says, in an account of this episode written by him, "passed quietly. Only, small knots of soldiers were seen to land in succession on the coast of Provence from the Isle of Elba where they had been in the service of the Emperor. The police made them talk. They were armed with regular permits. Their answer was almost identical to everybody; when they had asked to go back to France, Napoleon had told them to wait

and he would himself restore them to their country in no long time. It was clear enough.

"Information was sent to the Minister of the Interior. It ought to have excited the attention of the government. It was interpreted, on the contrary, as a proof that, one by one, the Emperor's followers were deserting him. Never was official sense of security greater than in the days which preceded the brusque arrival of Napoleon.

"The first of March was a Wednesday. At daybreak the Custom-house officers stationed at the head of the Gulf of Juan noticed a little fleet composed of a brig and some small vessels. They watched their movements. About ten o'clock in the morning two sloops, each having on board a strong detachment approached the station. They were challenged. On the reply of those in command, one of whom was General Cambronne and the other General Drouot, that they were soldiers from the island of Elba who were returning to France, they were bidden to go and land at Antibes. But all the time of the negotiations the sloops had been advancing. The moment they touched the shore, the officers jumped on to the beach, the soldiers followed, and the little band spread all over the landing-place. There were only seven men of the Customs. They made, and could make, no resistance. Besides, they suspected nothing and only saw in the strangers the return to their country of a larger number of soldiers than usual.

"At this spot the road runs very close to the sea. The soldiers who had landed took possession of it. One detachment was directed on Antibes, another on Cannes. This done, the rest of the troops were seen to land, then Napoleon himself and those who were about him, finally the baggage, two pieces of field artillery with their caissons, and a travelling carriage were put ashore. At this moment a post-chaise appeared on the road. It was the Duc de Valentinois, a peer of France, who was on his way to his principality of Monaco. He was conducted to the Emperor, of whose presence he was informed, and with whom he conversed for a short time before he continued his journey.

"Here is Napoleon's account of this incident in his *Works of Saint Helena* : 'The Prince of Monaco asked to speak to the Emperor. He was taken to the bivouac. Till then he had refused to believe that the

Emperor was there; when he saw him he showed the utmost astonishment. 'I shall go back,' he said, 'for your army will take several days to pass; perhaps, too, my journey to Monaco is useless and you have already had the place occupied.'

"The Emperor began to laugh. 'What are you thinking about?' said his Majesty.

"'Well, I suppose that your army is not less than twenty-five to thirty thousand men, and that you have had the help of the English and the Austrians.'

"'I am surprised at your opinion,' replied the Emperor. 'Do you, who have served under me, believe that I would deliberately pollute the soil of my country with foreign troops? In an hour you will be able to continue your journey, for my army consist of this bivouac.'

"'But what do you propose to do with such a handful?'

"'Be upon my throne before the end of the month.'

"Then the Emperor took the Prince of Monaco aside and conversed with him for half an hour, asking him for news of various men and women at the Court.

"Such was the story of the only eye-witnesses of the landing from Elba, that is to say, of the seven Custom-house officers, and of the few inmates of the neighbouring country-houses, who quickly came together on the spot. At that time the Gulf of Juan was almost a desert strand. Among these curious folk only those who recognized the Emperor in the midst of his men attached any importance to this event.

"Nevertheless the gendarmes were informed. They sent off an express to Captain Silvy who commanded the brigades of the department. This express, which went by relays from brigade to brigade, arrived at Draguignan in the night between the first and the second of March. The information which he brought was most obscure. Nothing was mentioned but 'a great detachment of soldiers returning from the isle of Elba.' They were called 'deserters.' The report added, as a rumour only, that Bonaparte himself was at their head.

"I lived in the Rue de l'Observance at Draguignan. About five o'clock in the morning of the second of March I heard some one calling me from the

street. It was the younger M. de Jouffrey, the mayor of the town, who bade me go immediately to the prefect's. A few minutes later I was there. Extraordinary activity prevailed. All the civil authorities were collected there as well as General de Morangiés, in command of the subdivision. Without another word M. de Bouthilier told me to get a horse and to hold myself ready to start.

"A quarter of an hour later we started. The prefect only took with him Captain Silvy, some gendarmes, two other persons, and myself. At the moment of starting, he gave me a roll of papers; it was the report from the Gendarmerie. We had no other compass.

"On leaving Draguignan, we took the road to Trans, then that to Le Muy, that is the route to Italy. Whither were we going? We did not know. What was M. de Bouthilier's plan? Doubtless he knew not himself. A stranger in that region, he hardly knew the country. His first care ought to have been to betake himself with all speed to the scene of the landing in order to find out accurately the number of the soldiers who had disembarked, and the identity of their leader. Perhaps he was thinking of this as he rode along. But, on the other hand, if the presence of Napoleon was established, what means had the unlucky official at his command of resisting a movement of this nature? He distrusted, not without reason, the loyalty of the troops and the feeling of the population. These bitter thoughts no doubt thoroughly succeeded in disquieting his mind, already and not unnaturally moved by such serious news.

"The whole garrison of Draguignan only consisted of a company of light infantry. Orders had been given for them to take up a position at Le Muy. These orders were only intelligible on the supposition that the commander of the detachment which had landed, after the debarkation in the Gulf of Juan, would proceed to cross the Estérel and march on Toulon. This would have been a childish manœuvre. Napoleon would never have made such a mistake. Moreover, arrived at Le Muy and finding no news there, we went on to Fréjus to sleep.

"Fréjus is at the very foot of the Estérel. Thus we were now only separated by this mountain from the place of landing itself. Outposts were fixed on the mountain to guard us against a surprise! Then a reconnoitring

party was sent towards Cannes, on the other side of the Estérel, to get intelligence after all this time. Strange event! This party never appeared again! It may be imagined in what anxiety the night drew out. At only a few leagues from the Gulf of Juan, we could not manage to find out what had happened there the night before!

"We lodged at the house of M. de Lacépède, an old naval officer, and mayor of Fréjus. I slept in M. de Bouthilier's room. This good man was bemoaning his lot and that of his family. If this debarkation covered a defiant return of the Emperor, he saw himself equally a victim either of the Restoration, for not having been able to stop it, or of the Empire for having tried to resist it. I tried my best to re-assure him. An adorer of the Emperor, like all the youth of the day, I knew that Napoleon had the army and the people with him, and that he could make good his hold on them again, and accomplish fresh military marvels. But I knew, too, that he would have to reckon at home with the opposition of the royalists and the defections of his old servants, and abroad with the foreign coalition. My judgment struggled with my hopes, and the event only too well confirmed the arguments which I put to the prefect of the Var for his consolation.

"On the morning of the 3rd of March we were still without news. A second reconnaissance was sent to Cannes with orders to bring information at all costs.

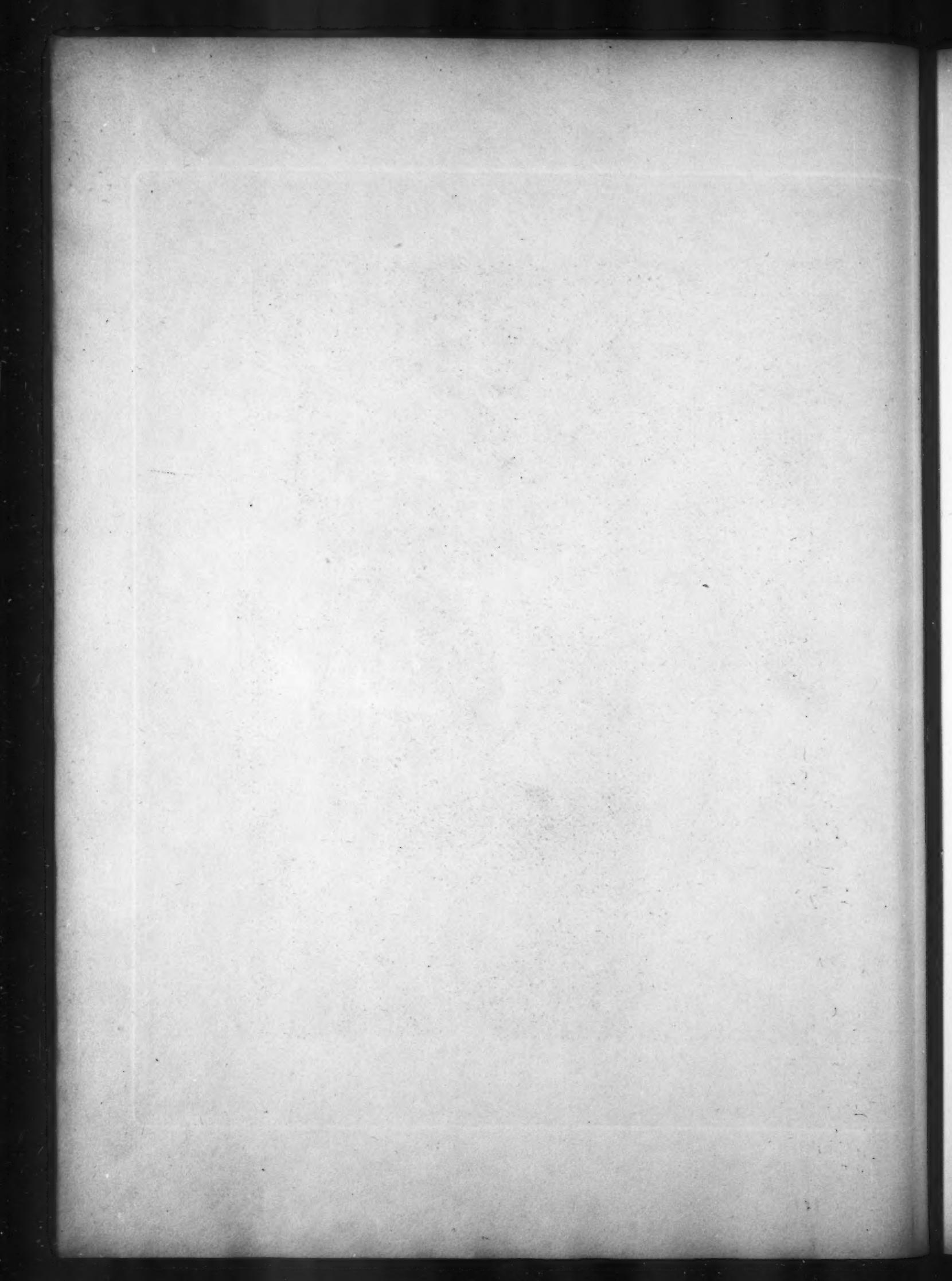
"To kill time the prefect despatched special couriers to Marshal Masséna, the Commander of the 8th military division at Marseilles, and to Count Roger de Damas, the Governor of Lyons. Then suddenly, simultaneously, and from all sides, the great news burst upon us, that it was Napoleon himself who had landed on the Gulf of Juan and that, while we were stamping about at the foot of the Estérel, he had taken the road to the Basses-Alpes, and had already got two days ahead of us.

"While our express was galloping towards Draguignan, what had the Emperor done?

"Following the detachment which had gone towards Cannes, he had encamped on the evening of March 1st and spent the night in a house situated at the gates of the town. The detachment which had moved on Antibes had, it is true, been disarmed on arriving there, but the soldiers



Bürgerpartei's Zug durch das Ver-Department.



from Elba had immediately joined with those of the 106th regiment, where the fermentation was extreme.

"From the morning of the 2nd, Napoleon was moving away from Cannes and had taken the way to the mountains. People had seen the little army traversing the suburbs of Grasse with drums beating. The Emperor was on horseback. Generals Bertrand, Drouot, and Cambronne were on foot, at his side. They had halted above the town, on the Place de la Foux. The local authorities had made no sign of life, and the town had no rations distributed. But the inhabitants had supplied provisions of all kinds, which were paid for in cash. All their available horses and mules were also bought up. Napoleon, standing on an eminence in the middle of the crowd, had said these simple words on leaving Grasse :

"I leave in the safe keeping of Monsieur le Maire of Grasse these two cannons, their limbers, and that carriage yonder."

"Thus lightened, the little army of Elba went to sleep at Séranon, the last commune in the *arrondissement* of Grasse. The next morning, March the 3rd, it entered the department of the Basses-Alpes. Thus, at the moment we were learning at Fréjus of the Emperor's landing, he had already crossed the boundary of the department of the Var.

"On the receipt of this intelligence, the prefect, none the less, made his arrangements to go to Grasse. We arrived there late in the evening. Installed at the Town-hall, we soon saw General Gazan appear. This officer, a native of that country, happened to be on leave at Mougins, near Grasse. He was one of the military men most appreciated by the Emperor. But in 1814 he had placed himself alongside Masséna, who had accepted a command from the Bourbons.

"The courier from Draguignan,' says Napoleon (*Works of Saint Helena*), 'announcing our landing, arrived at Castellane while we were there. The prefect believed that, at the worst, we were passing the night at Fréjus and asked for gendarmes and volunteers to form squads destined to march on our flanks.' This courier had been sent from Draguignan, before our departure for Fréjus. General Gazan had not shown himself during Napoleon's passage. M. de Bouthilier having evinced some intention of despatching some men of the National Guard in pursuit of the Elba

column, Gazan undertook to organize them. He suggested as their commander Major Gazagnaire, an officer on leave like himself, and like him a native of Grasse. It is needless to add that it was all confined to talking and that the men of the National Guard did not stir.

"We found at Grasse the two pieces of cannon and their limbers left there by Napoleon. We had them taken to Antibes. As to the carriage, M. de Bouthilier could think of nothing better than keeping it for his own use. We rode in it when we left Grasse on the morning of the 4th.

"From this moment, our Odyssey took a form absolutely platonic, for we were turning our backs on the invader. The prefect wanted to press on as far as Antibes. We passed, as we arrived there, waggons full of soldiers. They were the men of the detachment sent on the 1st of March by Napoleon, who were being taken as prisoners to Toulon. Antibes was in great excitement. The tumult did not abate the whole night. While M. de Bouthilier was sending off his couriers, I kept hearing shots fired every minute. They were aimed, I was told, at soldiers of the garrison who were leaping from the rampart to go and rejoin the Emperor. At Antibes, too, the prefect received visits from several general officers, among others from de G... a general of division. He received him very badly, and the latter took great offence thereat. Perhaps to this fact is to be attributed the severity with which M. de Bouthilier was treated during the Hundred Days. And yet what could be more inoffensive than this prefect's journey?

"To make matters worse, it became comic at the end. It was on the 5th of March that we at length started for the Gulf of Juan. In order better to take stock of the condition of the locality, M. de Bouthilier wanted to pass the Gulf post-haste. Horses were brought, and so we were now separated from one another, with a postilion leading the way. Chance had given me as a mount a great black coach-horse whose merciless joltings would have broken the back of a more hardened rider than I was. I very soon saw that the only way I could get out of it was by putting the beast to the gallop. I asked the postilion for his whip and sticking both my spurs in, I let myself go as hard as I could. In a twinkling I found myself at the head of the procession, carrying all the rest away with me. M. de Bouthilier, who was also whirled along in this wild race, of which he did not guess the cause, cried out to me :

'Stop, take care!' But I could not stop myself, and with a dizzy velocity we got over the six kilometres which separate Antibes from Cannes. Such was the plight and such the mien with which the prefect of the Var and his suite explored the Gulf which, five days before, had witnessed one of the greatest events of modern history!

"Above the Estérel, at the inn which bears its name, we found the Imperial carriage which was waiting for us. It was with this solitary trophy that the prefect of the Var returned to Draguignan the same night.

"During this time destinies were being accomplished. The report sent from Fréjus to Marshal Masséna had reached him in the night between the 3rd and the 4th of March, and its contents were forwarded by telegraph to the Minister of the Interior during the day of the 4th. The *Moniteur* of the 5th mentioned the Emperor's landing. On the 6th, a royal proclamation convoked the Legislative Chambers, at the same time that a royal decree announced the outlawry of Napoleon Bonaparte. But this decree was happily not known in the departments of the Var and of the Basses-Alpes until after he had passed through. On the 13th the Emperor performed his first act of sovereignty by means of a decree dated from Grenoble. Then the eagle flew from belfry to belfry away to Notre-Dame. The rest we know."

Such is my father's story. It illustrates pleasantly the history of this great deed.

Of all the events of the Imperial epoch the landing of the Gulf of Juan is that which has left on the memory of the people of the South of France the deepest and most lasting impression, for it is that which was carried out nearest to them. At Solliés-Pont, the southern quarter of the town was for a long time called the Island of Elba.

II. — THE PRISON OF HAM

By a coincidence which the periodic cycle of revolutions in France explains, my father, who had been a witness of the last episode of the Napoleonic epic, found himself, twenty-five years later, at the side of Louis Napoleon when he began his career. Marked down as a Liberal, my father

had been removed from his office as secretary-general of the Prefecture of the Pas-de-Calais by M. de Corbière in 1823. Political formulæ vary according to epochs. In 1823 the language of a dismissal was not without some grace. On announcing to my father his supersession M. de Corbière added : "I regret that this measure has seemed necessary to the King's government."

The Liberalism of the government of 1830 did not give him much credit for it. He was sub-prefect of Péronne when Prince Louis was removed to the castle of Ham, after the Boulogne affair, to await the end of the preliminary proceedings of his trial before the Court of Peers.

In the prison the Prince replaced the Carlist general Cabrera who was sent elsewhere.

The departure of Louis Napoleon from Paris had been attended with much mystery. He arrived at Ham by night. Such was the haste that there was not time to inform the local authorities. The Prince was already a prisoner in his *arrondissement* before my father knew anything about it. Why such precautions, and why such haste? Doubtless the Government feared an attempt at a rescue on the part of the Bonapartists. But public opinion, instead of being quieted, took the alarm at these extraordinary measures. The separation of the Prince from his fellow-prisoners of Boulogne gave rise to the most sinister rumours. By the irony of fate Louis-Philippe was suspected of meditating a *coup d'État* against the nephew of the Emperor, the future author of the famous decree of the 2nd of December.

I do not invent the phrase *coup d'État*. It was M. de Rémusat, the minister of the Interior, who used it and underlined it in his official correspondence.

Here is the curious letter which he wrote on this subject to my father to secure his government against public suspicion.

"Paris. August 8th, 1840.

"I regret, M. le Sous-Préfet, that a misunderstanding has delayed the sending of the despatch which informs you of the transference of Louis Bonaparte to Ham. It ought to have gone yesterday. My only object in

recommending you to second by every means the judicial and military authorities on this occasion is to prepare you against the idea that the detention of Louis (*sic*) at Ham is anything else than a step caused by the necessity of securing the custody of the prisoner, and of keeping him isolated. This is by no means a *coup d'État*, and the government has taken no decision which would involve him in different treatment from that of his accomplices. Be good enough to act on this view.

"For the moment he is in secret confinement, not only I believe (*sic*) by the decision of the magistrates, but also in consequence of the orders of the military governor of the Castle of Ham.

"I write to you in haste and beg you, etc., etc.

"CHARLES RÉMUSAT."

This (autograph) letter has its value. It shows clearly the state of the public mind and the need which the minister felt of fortifying himself against ideas which were in the air. It proves too, formally, that at Paris the safe custody of Louis Napoleon was by no means assured. Finally it is evidence that keeping the prisoners *au secret* was not due to a decision of the magistrate, but purely to the initiative of the military authority. It is really not likely that M. de Rémusat, writing to his subordinate, should have been reduced to "believing" that there existed a judicial decision, if this decision had in fact been given. The non-juridical character of the detention of Louis Napoleon in the fortress of Ham appears, from this point, certain for history.

The next morning my father received another letter, this time from the prefect of the department. The prefect of the Somme was then the Vicomte Henri Siméon, a peer of France, who was connected with my father by a close friendship throughout his life. The tone in which this young man, lately a simple auditor to the Conseil d'État, expresses himself when writing to one of the oldest friends of his family, is one of the greatest curiosities of political life :

"Amiens. August 9th, 1840.

"My dear sub-Prefect.

"The Minister of the Interior has sent me a copy of the instructions

which he has given you in regard to Louis Bonaparte. General Feisthamel, who has returned from Ham, has informed me of the arrival of the prisoner, of the departure of Cabrera, and has stated to me that you were expected.

"I would ask you to let me know what you have done. *I did not wish to proceed thither, lest I might hamper your action.* Moreover, the general was there and the first measures to be taken were purely military. I have asked the minister for instructions as to how the prisoner is to be treated, the expenses for his living, his exercise, his newspapers, etc. I have asked for an extra brigade to keep a lookout on the neighbourhood and to look after the secret agents, and a special commissary of police and men under him to watch the fortress and the town.

"I enclose a letter from the minister in answer to what I wrote to him on my return concerning you.

"Perhaps your prefecture will be due to Ham. Be zealous and active. It is a serious matter."

"I am just back from Eu where I was received à merveille. My father has returned from Mont d'Or.

"Farewell, my dear sub-Prefect, etc., etc.

"H. SIMÉON."

I advisedly underline in this letter the encouraging words by the help of which the first magistrate of the department, King Louis-Philippe's prefect, passed on his hand to my father with respect to the surveillance which was to be kept on the Emperor's nephew. Did he want thenceforward to put himself in a safe position, in view of the ever uncertain future? What happened was that M. le Vicomte Siméon never appeared at the castle of Ham, and that a little time afterwards he got himself summoned to other duties.

My father had not waited for this last letter to go to Ham. At this date he did not see the prisoner. The Prince was *au secret* even for him. He was enabled to affirm that the military authorities had officially been beforehand with him in the isolation of the prisoner. His visit was a commentary on the despatch, already sufficiently explicit, of the Minister

of the Interior. He did not return to Ham until after the sentence on the Prince by the court of Peers.

The removal from Ham to Paris for the trial was effected, as was that



from Paris to Ham, without the slightest intervention of the civil authorities. It is therefore true to say that, if M. de Rémusat had the right of protesting against the theory of a *coup d'État*, he could not have been able to deny that Ham and its fortress were, during the whole time of the Prince's detention, in a state of siege.

On the 6th of October, 1840, the Chamber of Peers, sitting as a High Court gave the judgment which sentenced Louis Napoleon to perpetual imprisonment in a fortress. The Prince was taken back to Ham. His incarceration now took on another aspect, and now it was that my father had regular communication with him, marked on both sides by a sort of cordiality within the limits of reciprocal propriety. The duty of custody being entirely within the competence of the governor of the fortress, my

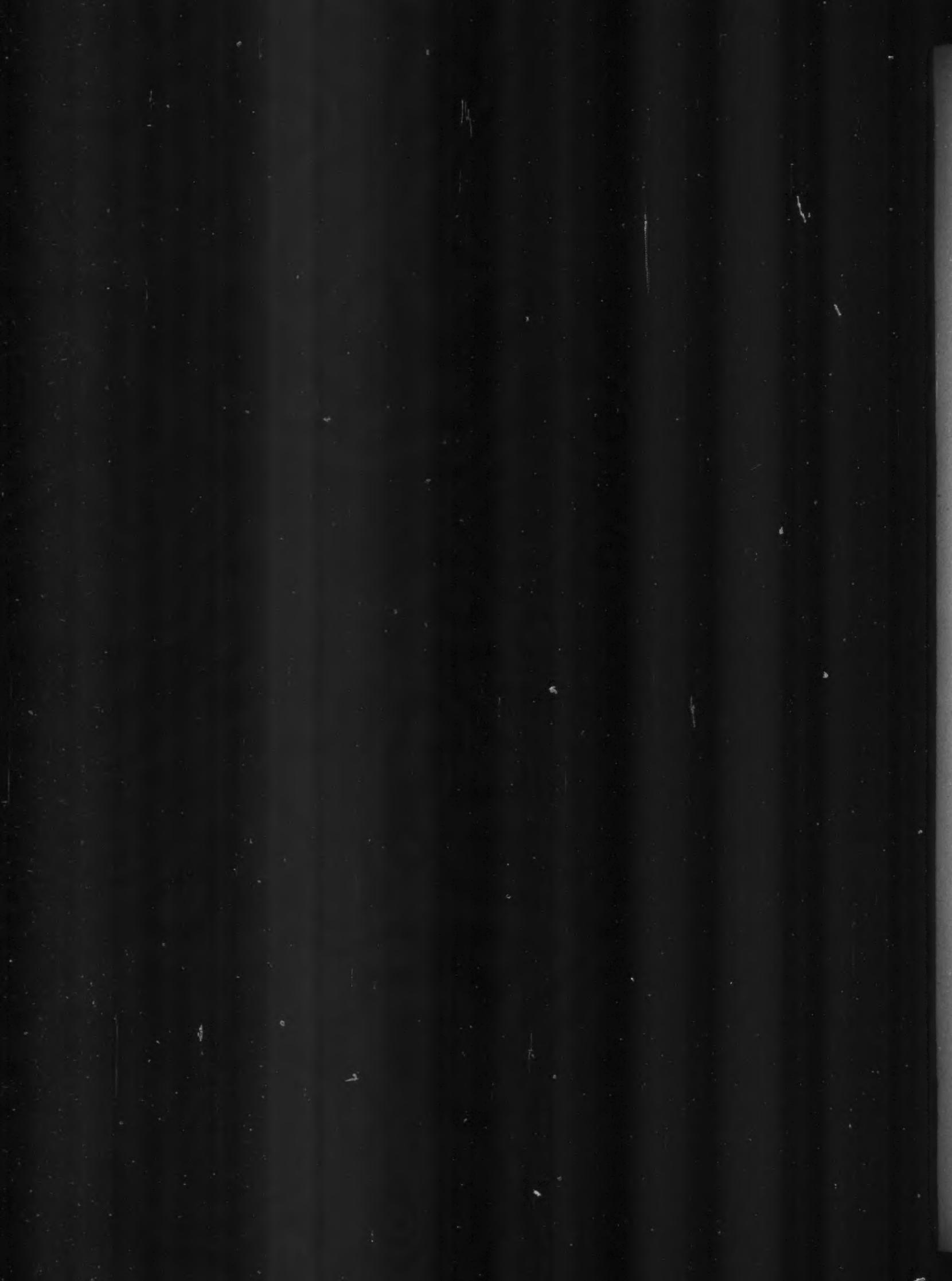
father had only to deal with the prisoner in regard to his needs and his wishes. What Louis Napoleon, accustomed to an active life, wanted above all, was the open air. More frequent outings in the yard and on the ramparts were arranged for him. His apartment, which was that previously occupied by Cabrera, was enlarged, ventilated in summer, better heated in winter. Nevertheless his health was giving way. It did not recover its balance until permission was given him to devote himself to historical and political and other works which, later, were included in his collected works.

But the man who wrote in 1839, from Carlton-Terrace : "My tongue is as free as my thoughts—and I love liberty," would not have tamely supported a lasting captivity. My father had quitted Péronne when Louis Napoleon escaped from Ham in 1841. But he was not surprised at this escape, the thought of which the prisoner's eye seemed alone to reflect.

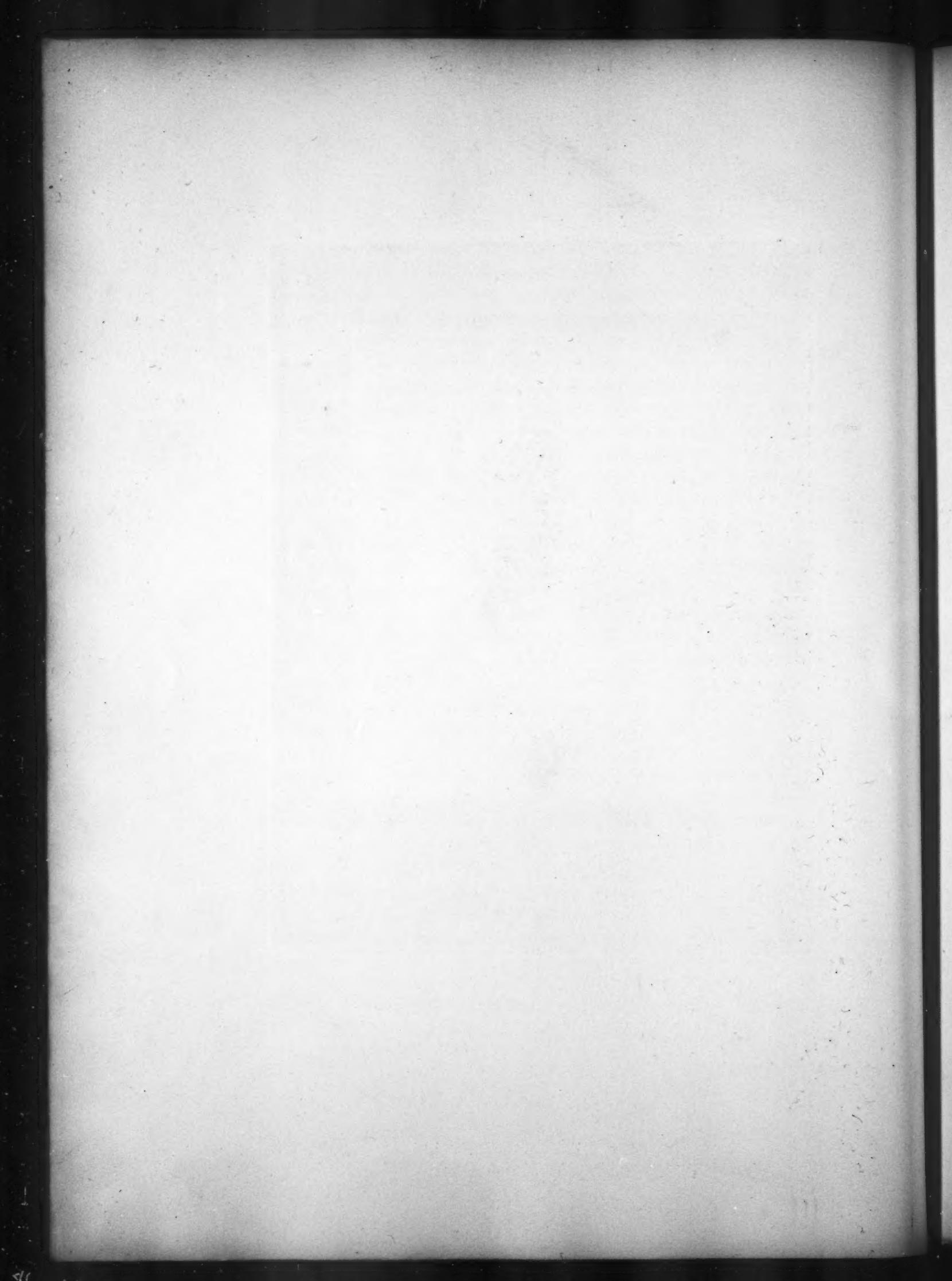
The Prince's relations with Airaud-Degeorge, the chief editor of the republican journal, the *Progrès du Pas-de-Calais*, were well known to my father. It was Degeorge who waited for the Prince with a carriage some leagues from Ham, when he escaped from the fortress; it was he who placed him in safety on the other side of the frontier.

Prince Louis, my father has told me, was more taking by an indefinable attraction in his personality than in his conversation. His speech was heavy and slow, but it breathed forth kindness even under lock and key, and even—so courteous was he—to the representative of the government whose opponent he was. Nothing in his manner betrayed his anxiety or his ambition; but there was in his look, his gestures, and his mien, something at once confident and resigned, which is the mark of minds possessed by the sentiment of an overpowering fate. He has been painted as a sphinx. He was certainly at this time an enigma as indecipherable to himself as to others. He was waiting, yet it was not the ecstatic waiting of the aspirant in the Coran. One has only to read the articles, the historical narratives, the sketches which he wrote during his imprisonment, to discover what acuteness, what new conceptions, what deep insight into political facts, he impressed into the service of his faith in his star.

My father carried away from him the idea that, if he ever played a







part in the affairs of his country, this Prince would conceive great ideas, sometimes chimerical, without troubling himself too much as to the means necessary for success, counting most often on his fortune and that of France. Thus it was that, twice risking a war without allies, he conquered in Italy and was conquered on the Rhine. Queen Hortense used to call her son a "sweet little obstinate." But he was never obstinate to fate. In 1869, when he felt universal suffrage tottering under him, though he still had a majority in the elective Chamber, Napoleon III accomplished by himself and with a good grace the political transformation which his successors will not have the intelligence to bring about.

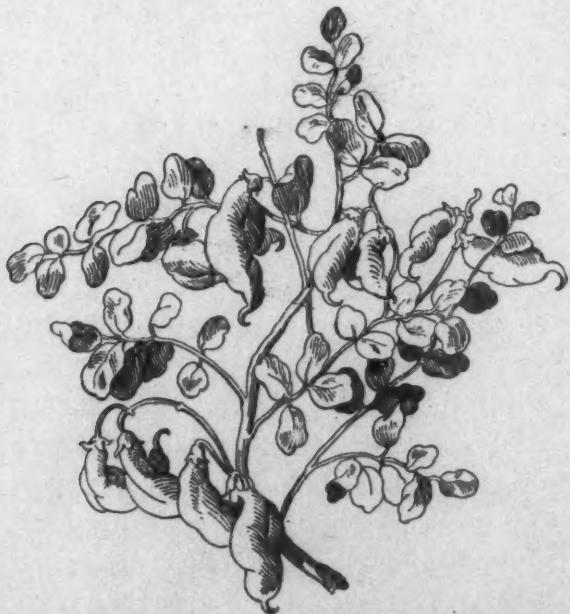
I was still a little boy in 1840. My father took me to Ham with him. We knew M. Jannet, a banker of the place, and of the Prince. While my father was at the fortress I used to go with our friends for a walk along the slopes of the fortifications, at the hour when the prisoner was taking his exercise on the ramparts. He would have a frock coat on, but he wore the military *képi*. At every turn he would strike the masonry of the bastion with his cane, as if he would have had the boundary which confined his steps fall back. As the hour of his walk came to be known, it became, especially on market days, the object of a sort of pilgrimage by the peasants of the neighbourhood. They saluted the Prince as he passed, and he would return their salute with the same smiling and calm air which might have been noticed in him twenty years later, when he was going up or down the Champs-Élysées.

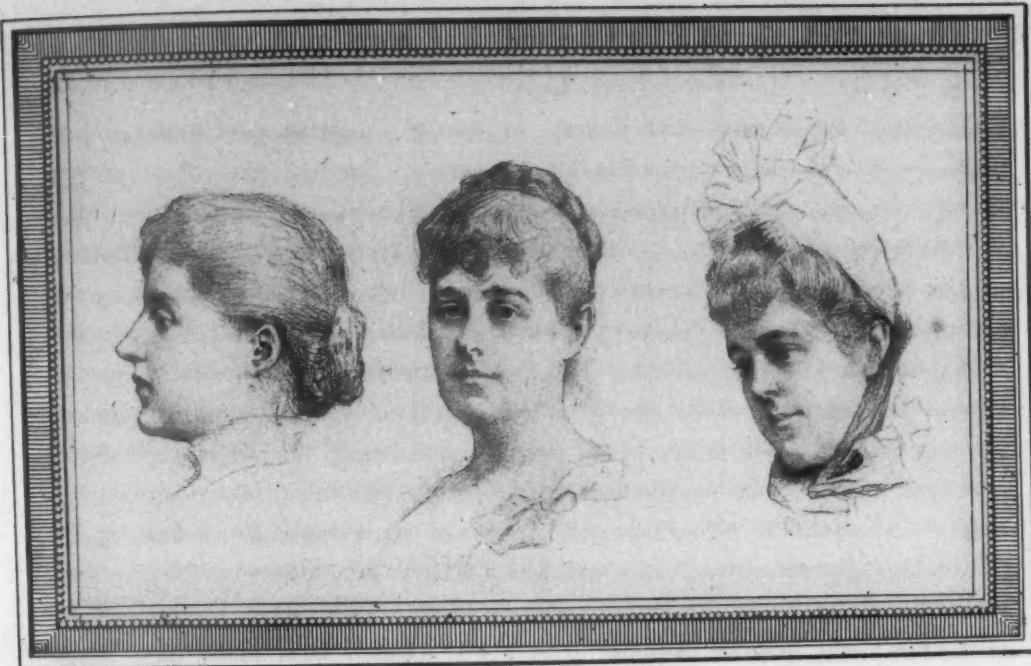
The peasant of Picardy is not talkative, yet I have often heard him give his opinion on the nephew of the Emperor and his plans. At that time he showed no enthusiasm about the matter. But the sudden appearance of a Napoleon on the scene, and the strange adventure of Boulogne did not astonish him. Whereas the governing classes receive with a shout of laughter every new event which threatens to disturb their plans, the rustic, more wisely, weighs the chances of the future, and sees a possibility for the country where they see nothing but a hindrance to their reign. The government of Louis-Philippe had nothing to fear from the people of the Somme. They would not have fired a cartridge to rescue the prisoner. But in their reflections after work-time, they felt themselves re-assured by the calling

forth of a great glory and a dazzling power. Jacques Bonhomme might also be called Jacques the Fatalist.

The Vicomte Henri Siméon wrote to my father that a prefecture might result to him from Ham. As my father confined himself to doing his duty and "no zeal," no prefecture resulted him therefrom. As a set-off, Louis-Philippe's old Prefect of 1840, who came back from Eu, where he had been received *à merveille*—was made a Senator under the Empire of his quondam prisoner. He even had to submit, on the benches of the Senate, to one of those harangues of M. Dupin, such as the orator of Berri knew how to make, which aimed, in his person, at the compromises which were the result of the Mirès trial. None the less I found him sitting at the Luxembourg with the title of a Government Commissioner when I was there in 1870. He gave me a cordial reception, all the more because the ministry of Justice was still occupied with this same Mirès whose mouth death alone could close, and he was good enough to speak to me in affectionate terms of my father, who was then long dead.

ADALBERT PHILIS.





PROFESSIONAL BEAUTIES

The existence and social recognition of the Professional Beauty of our day, may be taken as a sign, if not of the actual demoralisation of the age, at any rate as being a proof of the smallness of its social interests, as compared to a time when society, so called, represented the most important political centre in the country.

Alfred de Musset, in the introduction to his *Confession d'un Enfant du siècle* makes a curious allusion to the fact that the very possibility of the existence of his hero, and the practicability of the ideas which his tale sets forth, depend on those conditions of civilisation where the active spirits of the time have no great movements of a political or social character wherein to employ their energies, and when consequently the youth of the period becomes absorbed in a sentimental and almost morbid activity, searching for the interest of life in the relation of the sexes under abnormal and unreal conditions.

Such may be said in some respects of the condition of a society

that counts the Professional Beauty as one of its component and integral parts, and a notable feature of its existence; for the true Professional Beauty is essentially a modern creation. The Dianes de Poitiers, the Pompadours, the Maintenons, who were *de facto* the Professional Beauties of the great French Court, were no doubt beautiful women, but were also women possessed of very different attributes indeed to those of the china doll of London society. The very possibilities of those times also gave to those women the means of using their talents, and employing their power in other ways than simply captivating the hearts of kings, and exercising an undeniably supremacy in the boudoir. To compare the modern Professional Beauty to one of those great Aspasia of history, is like comparing the homily of the housewife with the influence for good or evil which a powerful minister possesses over the mind of his sovereign, who knows not how to dispense with his services. It is many days since England ever saw a woman occupying such a position as that of these French queens of the left hand; and it is probable that the English people would never have consented to see any woman wield a vast political power openly so near the throne. It cannot be denied, however, that on many occasions in English history women *have* tacitly exercised very considerable power over the men who have filled the highest posts in the State. Into what was the basis of this influence we are not called upon to enquire. Were we to do so, we should no doubt find that human nature was pretty much alike all the world over, and that the mutual influence of men and women on one another depended on those relations of sex which the French novelists are such past masters in analysing in detail.

However, there have been women in English society, and equally no doubt in the societies of other countries, who have owed their power and influence to the possession of beauty of a commanding order, used, however, in conjunction with other qualities not less important, such as high connection with powerful families, and the possession of imagination, judgment, and tact. If an Englishwoman possess the latter qualities, she may be considered to be very highly gifted, and few men will be found proof against these talents which are indeed rare amongst English men or women.

The early days of this century found English society led by and noted

for several women more or less celebrated for this rare combination of characteristics. Those were the days when the landed aristocracy virtually ruled England, and the popular Chamber was almost owned by the Peerage. In those days of pocket-boroughs a woman's influence in politics was a thing to be reckoned with. All the outer forms of popular liberty, of freedom of institutions, existed, but the handle of the machine was in the hands of an oligarchy, and the handle of the oligarchic machine yielded to the pressure of the will of the handful of women who then represented and led society. Half a dozen of these influential women decreed who belonged to society and who did not, and against their decree there was no appeal. The hundreds of different "sets" which are one of the most curious features of modern so-called "Society in London" did not then exist; if you were not of the *crème de la crème*, you were hopelessly outside the pale of social salvation, and, worse off than the Peri at the gate of Paradise, there was not the smallest hope of your ever gaining admittance to the Elysian Fields within. Those were the palmy days of Almack's : another proof of the curious smallness and concentration of society in those days, when one ball-room of ordinary dimensions could contain everybody who was anybody, or who had any social existence worth mentioning.

This state of things naturally could not last with the onward march of events, and beginning with the Reform Bill of 1832, by degrees the power of the landed aristocracy, and with it the influence of women in the affairs of ministries, and politics generally, has gradually ceased to exist. The dyke once broken, the waters were spread abroad on the surface of the earth; and the compact nucleus which once called itself "Society," has been swamped and overwhelmed by the flood of all sorts and conditions of men and women, hitherto unheard of, who arrive from the uttermost parts of the country, and on the strength of a house in the wilds of Bayswater, or a mansion in South Kensington, lay claim to a footing in London society.

Institutions and forms may change, however, but not the innate ideas and sentiments of the human race. Men will still be influenced by beauty, and women will continue to seek in one form or another, for

opportunities of employing their peculiar kind of power. To most women every other woman appears in the light of a rival in some respect. Love of secret management and of intrigue in its various forms, will always offer sufficient inducements to the typical woman to make her put forth her strength.

Formerly the objects of her ambition were larger, that is to say, they had larger influence and effect. They were not different in character, nor in the method of attainment. Fifty years and more ago it was a great place at Court that was being struggled for under the outward appearance of smiles and pretty speeches to rivals. To-day it is only an invitation to Marlborough House for somebody who is not quite of "the gang." Then a cousin or an *amant de cœur* wanted a regiment, or an official sinecure, when prizes of this kind were plenty. To day it is simply a nomination to the Diplomatic Service, or the "C.B." for a gouty old uncle from whom the fair suppliant has "expectations." Then a hostess's aim was to get up a great political banquet which would make the opposition wince as the news gradually eked out next day through the little village of Mayfair. Now caps are pulled as to who can secure the Prince for her ball, or still better, far better, who can get the Princess to honour the entertainment with her presence.

And be it known to all whom it may concern, that in these modern days, when, as I said before, the dykes are broken and the waters are spread abroad on the surface of the earth, these honours are within the reach of all who possess the means to "pay the piper" continuously and without stint.

Society in London, from the various causes I have slightly enumerated, presents a curious study for the philosopher; the salient feature being the wild restless craze for amusement and notoriety. Amusement, as society understands it, being somewhat expensive, and "society people" being nearly all, owing to the prevalent depression, in that interesting situation picturesquely known as "pulling the devil by the tail," it follows that if society will have its amusements, somebody else must pay for them; and so we have arrived at the hostess whose invitations are sent out for her in the names of several *grandes dames* (she having made it worth their while, in one way or another, to act as her social

sponsors), and at the host whose throng of guests mistake him for one of the waiters, as he wanders unknown, and unrecognized, through his own supper rooms.

It is in such a *milieu* and under such social conditions that the modern Professional Beauty has been evolved and invented. "Smart society" has learnt to recognize her as being necessary at its feasts and *fêtes*. The Professional Beauty of the hour takes rank with the supper from Gunter's, the floral decorations from Green's, and the Hungarian band, and her services, towards making the entertainment a success, can be as little dispensed with as theirs. But the perch upon the Royal wrist is a somewhat precarious post of honour, as the poor Professional Beauty must often find.

To be able always to amuse and always to look interesting, serene and lovely, is no easy task; and when there are no outside and active interests to maintain an admiration or an attachment such as I have alluded to as being possible under a former *régime*, it is no wonder that interest soon flags, and the Professional Beauty is forced to the unpleasant discovery that her slippery foothold in the ranks of the "Upper Ten" is solely dependent on the continuance of the Royal favour and attention. Occasionally it has happened that the head of the Professional Beauty has been unable to stand the strain of her sudden exaltation to the giddy height of Marlborough House, and that she herself has accelerated her decline and fall by relapsing into the manners and customs of her former surroundings. The Prince has a distinct appreciation of practical jokes when tried upon his friends and acquaintances, but the light-hearted Professional Beauty who gaily slipped a piece of ice down the Royal back at a supper party one night, took with her, into her immediately subsequent banishment, the knowledge that His Royal Highness's appreciation of practical joking was limited solely to the persons of other people.

Another thing which gives a peculiar character to the position of Professional Beauty is the prevailing taste for æstheticism which is one of the features of the age. The mild sentimentalism which was fashionable at the beginning of the century was quite unlike the beauty-worship of

to-day. The "Keepsake" type of beauty was a thin, pale-faced, ethereal girl in her teens, with flowing ringlets and a pink and white skin, as we can judge by the fancy pictures of those times. Very insipid would she be in comparison to the taste of to-day, which is disposed either to worship the weird, mysterious, and anaemic type of languid beauty, or to bestow its admiration on the pronounced, the noisy, the unconventional, and, we might almost say, the rude and unrefined type of excessive youth or absolute giddiness.

The latter type is the one which has recently been selected for honours, and the young lady who boisterously claps men on the back, or plays leap-frog with them on the deck of a yacht, is likely to be first favourite for the time. The former type is chiefly worshipped by the artistic and seemingly refined. The woman with brains and wit as well as beauty is not included in any of these categories, for, being the exception that proves the rule, she has no place therein, or in the ranks of Professional Beauties.

No woman, unless past forty, is permitted in England to have opinions of her own. If she persists in having them, or in living her life to please herself, she is looked upon askance as being "eccentric" and "odd," a hopeless bar to the social advancement and success at which the Professional Beauty aims. The true *rôle* of the Professional Beauty is to be either artfully unconscious and ever ready to accept admiration and useful homage, or to be noisily boisterous, actively funny, given to practical jokes; also it is necessary to her social advancement that she should, on suitable occasions, be able to cement the passing attachment of her admirers by the concession of a species of what might be called rough and cursory affection of an eminently unpoetical kind. This is all that the ordinary Englishman wishes for, or expects, from the other sex. He wants to be amused, and at times he wants to be flattered, but he does not want in any way that anything or anybody should be a tie upon his liberty; and in all these characteristics the Professional Beauty reflects him accurately. A strong and lasting affection she is not only incapable of herself, but it would bore her very much to be the object of such an attachment. Hence constancy is the one thing

which neither men or women of this class look for in their friendships; they seek momentary amusement, nothing more.

The man's vanity is flattered by being seen in the company of a Professional Beauty; the woman's vanity is flattered by being surrounded by a swarm of well-dressed *gommeux*; and so the game goes on, played with loaded dice on both sides, if you will, but at least with no possible loss, as neither side stakes anything but counters. Besides, to the women, constancy would mean being more or less compromised, owing to other women's jealousy being excited at finding the joint in the armour. The wise Professional Beauty, therefore, never allows any one of her male friends to *afficher* her permanently. She is "all things in turn and nothing long" to any of them. She appears to use them chiefly for small offices, or if she accords them higher favours, there is usually a distinct *quid pro quo* given or received, as necessity and opportunity may demand, or chance afford.

The chief characteristic of the whole relation of a lady of this eminence with her friends, is that, as far as the men are concerned, nothing is serious or lasting. The aim and object of existence is enjoyment, and rivalry with other women; and if the men are the rungs of the ladder by which a woman must climb to fame, it would be absurd to despise or neglect them.

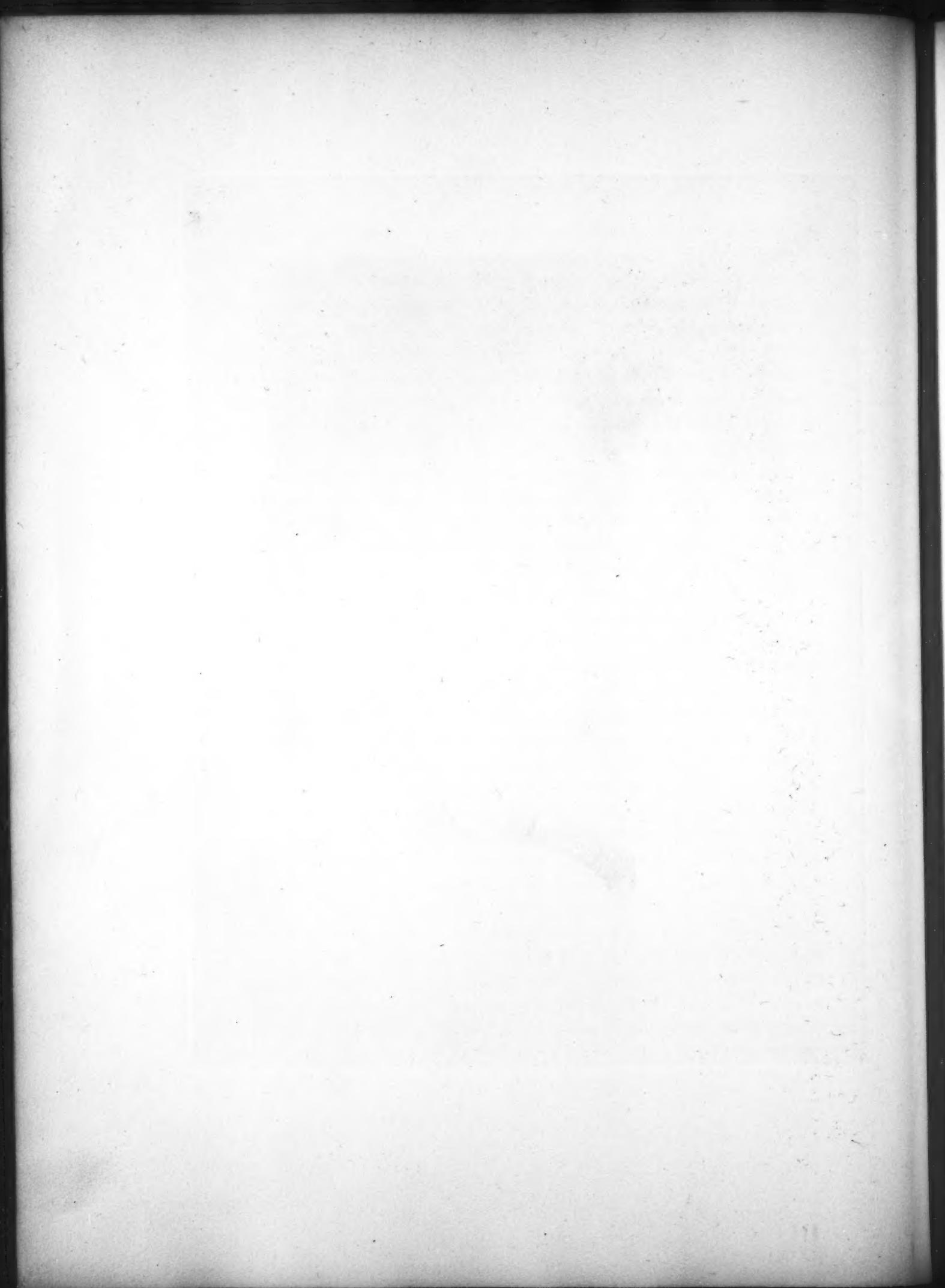
The mysterious and languid beauty is another variation of the genus Professional Beauty. Her *rôle* is very different to that of the boisterous hoyden, whose flow of animal spirits is found to be so exhilarating by her *blasé* surroundings, that it may be considered the chief foundation of her popularity. The languid beauty generally affects to be artistic and spiritualistically sympathetic. She is extremely sensitive to "spiritual affinities," which she has a way of discovering in the most ordinary *gandin* of the day, to his secret surprise and intensely flattered vanity. The flattery is to him so subtle that he sees nothing but the dreamy visionary eyes of the sorceress who tells him she can "read his very soul," and the mere fact of being told, by some one else than the parson, that he has a soul which has "affinities" (what can they be, he wonders!) soothes his vanity with the pleasing consciousness that he is

not as other men are. A species of vaporous affection is the charm disposed of by the languid Professional Beauty, and her memory is so conveniently constructed that she absolutely forgets on the morrow the favours she has conferred the day before. How can so ethereal a creature be burdened with a memory for material facts? It is rank heresy to her whole being to suppose that her mind can attard itself on its passage through the spheres, to think of such mundane and commonplace things as the events of the day before! This is her mode of defence against importunity, and it has the additional advantage of enhancing the curiosity and interest of her admirers. This type of character is admirably ingenuous and full of feeling; a very sensitive plant in short. It can refuse itself no pressing emotion of the moment which the magnetism of an admirer may produce; but the vibration is somewhat momentary. The leaves of the sensitive plant open again in the sunshine, showing no trace of the touch which has caused them to fold up in a delicious tremor; and the memory of the discoverer of affinities is so shadowy or non-existent, that the concession is wiped out as soon as it has been made. Some men are immensely attracted by this class of women, especially those who may be called neuter or uncharacterised in their tastes, and who, while they wish for and seek the reputation of being admirers of beauty, have no real inclination for an enterprising or absorbing effort of affection. This class of men is by no means as uncommon as might be supposed; the vaporous Professional Beauty is to them everything that can be wished, and her affectation of artistic and spiritual feeling, as well as that shortness of memory to which I have alluded, are only additional attractions. There is such a fascination in that want of memory, and in seeing how much she can forget!

While discussing this modern feminine production, it should be remembered as typical of the genus that it was no envious and malevolent "outsider" who tarred and feathered it with the name of Professional Beauty, which has clung so close ever since. It is on historical record that the epithet was deliberately applied to herself by one of the leaders of the movement, when asked to admire the good looks of a *débutante*, which she contemptuously acknowledged to be "not bad for an amateur."







It would be hard to invent a more typical answer for the class of women who first brought in the dignified fashion of allowing their photographs, often in the most *décolletée* toilettes, to be exposed for sale in the shop windows, to be commented upon by all the butcher boys in the streets, by all the loungers in the Burlington Arcade. Report goes even further, and asserts that the sale returns from their various photographers are a matter of much envious comment amongst these *belles et honnêtes dames*, as Brantôme would say, and that the one who is most in demand in the shop windows feels a glow of honest pride at such a mark of appreciation by her countrymen.

The Professional Beauty's husband offers also nearly as many curious points of study as his wife. To begin with, he is an absolute necessity to her existence. He must be there to *timbrer le papier*, and provide her with a semblance of social status and an anchorage. As Madame Bonivard says in *Les Surprises du Divorce* : "Un mari ! cela permet tout et cela n'engage à rien," and this is the value that the husband of the Professional Beauty possesses in the eyes of his wife and of her surroundings. As long as he is to the fore, a Professional Beauty may permit herself pretty nearly anything she likes; who will dare to throw a stone at a married woman accompanied by her lord and master? And as it was in the management of their lamps that the difference between the wise and foolish virgins was shown, so may the wise Professional Beauties be distinguished from their foolish sisters, by the way in which they manage their husbands. They may bully them, they may snub them in public as well as in private; many other things they may also do which it is unnecessary to enumerate ; but the wise Professional Beauty sticks to her husband like a leech, and should he show any serious symptoms of turning restive, she will vanish with him abroad, or to some quiet country place, where she will fill him so full of matrimonial honey and wifely attentions, that his suspicions are lulled to sleep, and he is led back once more to dance in his chains in the sunlight of society. However, as a rule, the husband of a Professional Beauty is too well trained, and knows his place and its advantages too well, to dream of "making a fuss," that blackest of sins in the eyes of

society! He may sulk, and he often does, and the Professional couch is frequently one of something else than roses; but on the morrow the game begins again, and one will see "the husband of Mrs. So-and-So" (he never has a name of his own), wandering in his usual aimless way on the outskirts of the crowd that surrounds his wife, not daring to approach any closer, and bearing the badge of his servitude in the cloak thrown over his arm. To hear a Professional Beauty talk of her husband is one of the most touching things imaginable, on or off the stage. The way she speaks of "darling Jack," his likes and dislikes, his opinions, his habits, and, above all, of their mutual adoration, is enough to soften the heart of a stone, if not that of a cynical philosopher; never were two such love-birds to be seen or heard of since the days of Cupid and Psyche! This style of conversation is immensely popular with the old dowagers, who, recognizing the necessity of having the Professional Beauty of the hour at their entertainments, are yet torn with doubt as to her propriety. These old ladies feel a secret gratitude to the Professional Beauty for her house-top proclamations of devotion to her lord, as it smooths all difficulties away so comfortably for every one.

As with the husband so with the children, the latter being of almost as great social value to the Professional Beauty as the former—while they are small; and it was a very wise Professional Beauty who supplanted the pet dog of fashion with the pet child, as companion of the morning walks in the Row. What could look sweeter and more angelically innocent than the "young mother with her child;" and one Professional Beauty, with an absolute stroke of genius, created a *furore* by appearing dressed like her child, mother and diminutive daughter both in white muslin and lace, broad ribbon sashes, and sun-bonnets. There is a prevalent sentimentality which is curiously characteristic of the English, and which with few exceptions pervades all classes. This finds its outcome pictorially on the walls of Burlington House, where the nursery is served up *ad nauseam* annually. The British public will go into hysterics of delight over anything that appeals to this inane sentimentality, and the Professional Beauty knows how to turn this to account. No thought of the harm done to her child by all the unwholesome dressing, unwholesome hours, unwholesome

society, etc., ever occurs to the Professional Beauty and her public. The mother and child "make such a pretty pair," and the not unnatural result is that we have arrived at infantile Professional Beauties, whose photographs are exhibited and sold in the shop windows long before they make their *début*, and who, by the time they do emerge into society, are as well acquainted with the mysteries of the "make-up box" as any actress on the stage.

The impressions which I have described so far are those which strike one regarding what I might call the adventitious character among the women who are chiefly known and noted for their beauty in the large cosmopolitan society such as London now possesses. The permanent elements of social stability, of rank, position, and fortune are not always easy to define. Undoubtedly rank still counts for much, even in these days of democratic equality. Money is now as ever, a very solid basis for social stability so long as it lasts. Social tact is also an element, as well as rank and wealth, in the problem of the stability of the equilibrium, which may be taken as the dividing line between what I call the adventitious members of London society, and its fixed and permanent social landmarks. Now the true Professional Beauty is essentially an ephemeral and unstable personage, and at any moment may lose in a day, by some false move in the game, all the advantages she has gained over her feminine rivals and adversaries in previous years. There are plenty of women ready and panting to elbow her out the moment she allows a breach to be made in her social defences. She is also perpetually being compelled to run greater risks than a woman who has, by birth or antecedents, "*une position faite*." A Becky Sharp under the disguise of a creature overflowing with the milk of human kindness, has not an easy rôle to play, and the strain of keeping up the disguise before the world, must often be considerable; still nothing would tempt her to relinquish it. The rivalry of life amongst society women produces that form of mental excitement which to them means pleasure; and not only the adventuress, but the woman of unquestionable position, cannot resist the temptation to enter the lists, so as to carry off some social prize. The cultivation and worship of personal charms for their own sake is therefore a necessary part of her military accoutrements to the wealthy and high-born lady.

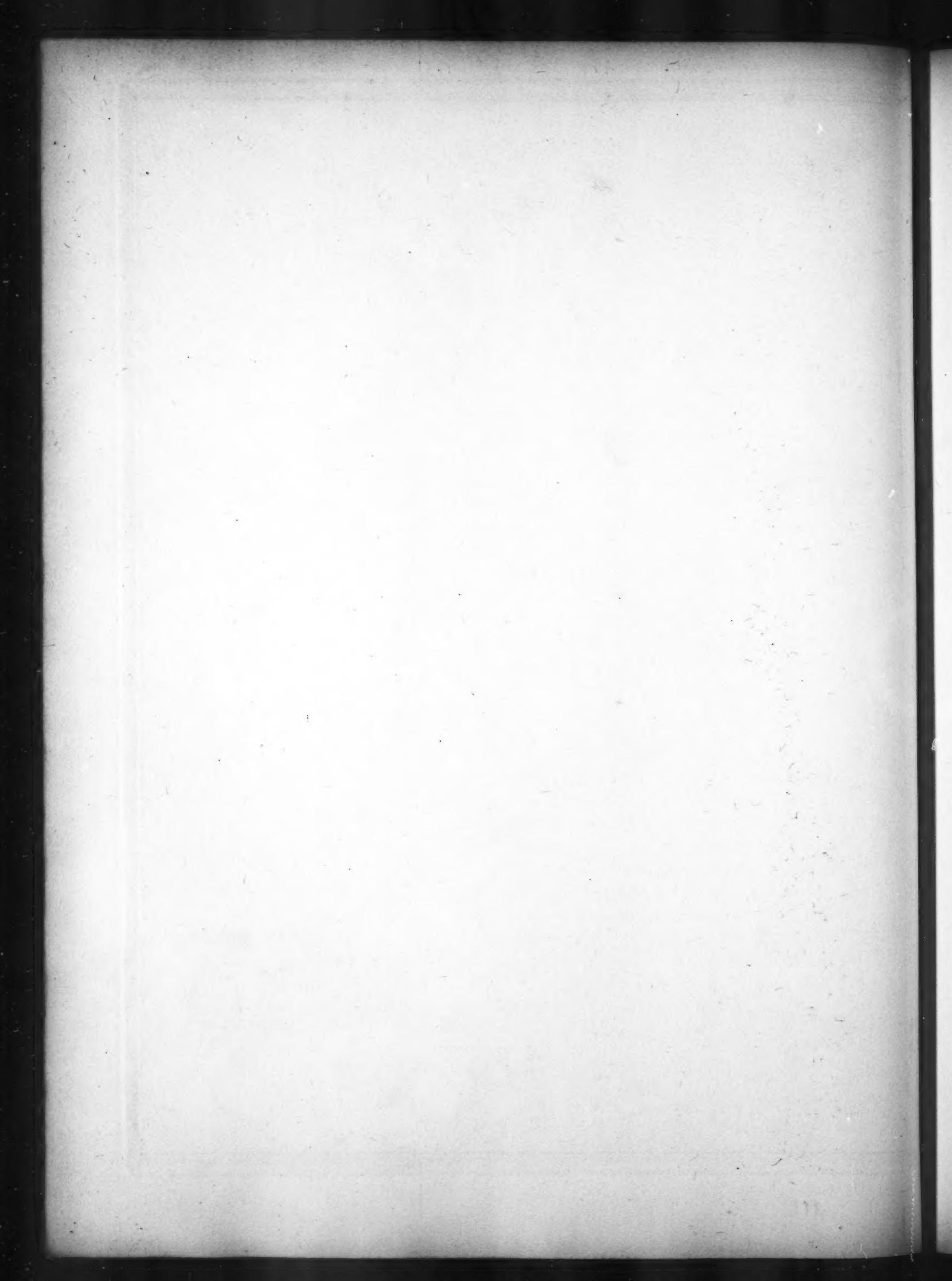
who wishes to become the envied possessor of as many social scalps as possible in the heyday of her youth. She is quite willing to combine this form of excitement with the more material occupations of married life, and the bringing into the world of a large family. Children are an invaluable bulwark, behind which a woman can manœuvre her social schemes with considerable advantage and impunity. They undoubtedly present a weighty argument to the male mind in favour of accepting the presence of a skeleton in a domestic cupboard, if ever the sun of happiness should seem to grow dim about the matrimonial hearth. The great lady of London society who happens to possess a reputation for beauty is thus often by no means adverse to descending into the arena, and trying a fall with the professional rank and file of London's more fleeting forms of social success.

In no country more than England, does the personality of the woman derive its chief importance from the social position of her husband. The woman of no birth at all, the cotton-spinner's daughter, the child of the pork-butcher, may, by the accident of marriage, find herself the courted companion of Royalty, and of all that is best in society. Her parentage and origin are forgotten. She is absorbed, so to speak, in the circumstances and surroundings that she weds, and no one would stop to enquire about her father's reels, or her mother's Bath chops. The world lives too fast to consider pedigree or family antecedents among womankind; and in England the old barbaric idea of the woman being absorbed into the husband's family, as if she were a mere chattel, to the absolute exclusion of her individuality, flourishes with almost unabated vigour. No woman, unless she is a great heiress, ever dreams of quartering her armorial bearings with those of her husband. She adopts the crest, the coat of arms, and the name of her lord and master, and in a week or two will talk of "we Plantagenets" as if she had never borne any other name since her entrance into the world. With the husband she has every consideration; without him she has nothing, and is nothing; a fact which she is well aware of, and she will therefore wisely undergo any and every humiliation, brutality, and degradation, sooner than let go everything, social position, and social recognition, which he represents in her existence.



Watery London Phot.

Brisban. Eng.



To women in England, the reputation of beauty is a prize they all aspire to, much in the same way that men would all aspire, if they could, to political celebrity and fame. It is the fashion for men to look upon politics as meaning social advancement to themselves in one form or another; and it is the fashion to look upon notoriety for beauty as an analogous avenue to social fame and distinction. All people do not make use of their advantages in the same way, for all people have not the same aspirations. Women in this are no exception, and those who form the stable elements of society, are not less diversified in their tastes than their more unstable sisters. They have no pressing needs of any kind to consider. They have none of the coarser necessities to think over and provide for. Their lives are more absolutely lives of pleasure, and they shine by reason of the greater nonchalance and indifference with which they can afford to treat both people and things. They are, therefore, the more *recherchées* and sought after by a gaping public that is easily captivated by this perpetual appearance of reserve strength. To define the exact line where a woman may be said to make her personal charms the major interest in her life, would be difficult, and indeed impossible. A certain self-love is the inherent vice, if one may call it so, of the whole genus woman; and there are none but the most humble, who have satisfied themselves, by repeated inspection in the looking-glass, that they must certainly be devoid of all pretensions to beauty, that do not more or less look upon their outward personality as being one of the most important interests in life. The advent of middle age is dreaded by them all as a time when their influence will diminish, unless they have known how to lay up the harvest of their youth, whatever may be the crop which they have cultivated, either of love at home, or power abroad, which shall stand them in good stead in the evil day. Some indeed stack their harvest green, and find afterwards only Dead Sea fruit in their garners. The many uses to which personal charms and beauty may be put in youth, are as varied as the intellectual or other advantages which may chance to befall a man. That beauty *per se*, has a greater value in modern London society than in any other society extant, no one could deny. That it is always used rationally and to a good purpose, no one would attempt to assert. The pleasures

of social success are things which exist not only on the surface but are essentially of the most transient description. The courted beauty of to-day is, to all intents and purposes, dead to-morrow, be it from one cause or another; and her very name seems like the echo from another world to even her intimate friends the year following. The Amazon falls in the ranks; no one stops to pick her up, and the next comer steps into her place, and alas! often into her very "Holy of Holies," before the summer leaves are tinged with autumn russet, "and her place knows her no more."

London possesses, more than any other town in the world, a little of everything. Its society women are no exception to this all-pervading characteristic; and it is thus that we find: the Professional Beauty, whose whole life is an advertisement of the beauty which constitutes her sole claim to recognition by society; the great society lady, well-born, well-bred, placed both by birth and marriage on the topmost rung of the social ladder, who yet is willing and anxious to descend into the arena and pit herself against her less fortunate rival; and in contrast to these ultra-modern types, we get the *mère de famille*, the *femme de temple*, and the *femme de foyer*, all in the narrowest and most precise and prejudiced of types, such as really may be said to exist in no other country. Last, but not least, rare and precious, but yet existent, we find certain women, who, while they are celebrated for their beauty, and their personal charm, are also, in the very truest sense of the word, *femmes de foyer* at the same time that they are unquestionably *femmes du monde*. But these, alas, are more or less exceptions, and hardly enter into the scope of this article. They have nothing in common with either of the first two types of Professional Beauties in the above list; to them the fact of their beauty seems as natural and as little worthy of special remark as any other fact of their daily existence, and one which they remember as little as the colour of the binding of the book they may happen to be reading. That the binding as it were, both of themselves and their books should be pleasing to the eye, enters into the eternal fitness of things. It is an agreeable fact, but not worth more attention being given to it than anything else, and the mere idea of its being advertised or discussed by the world at large makes these women retire into themselves with a shiver of

contempt and disgust. Of such, therefore, it would evidently be out of place to speak in an article on Professional Beauties.

One thing which has profoundly changed the character of society and its tastes, has been the large increase given to its numbers, the greater widening of its class, and above all the complete publicity in which it lives. Notoriety is the craving need and passion of the day. To see their names, their smallest actions, their clothes, their entertainments, etc., chronicled at length in print, affords the modern man and woman intense gratification. It is the fashion to vilify "Society journals," and to wonder with charming *naïvete*, "How do those people get to know?" But it is more than probable that such a remark will be uttered by the person who has supplied the paragraph in question. Some of these papers frankly insert announcements that they will gladly receive accounts of entertainments, sketches of the people present, or the dresses worn on such occasions, etc., and it would not be very wide of the mark to assert that these accounts are usually supplied by the hostess herself, who is subsequently "overwhelmed with surprise," when her friends call her attention to them. The possession of wealth is the ultimate source of social power, and though titles, and ancient birth, and lineage are in no way despised, the real test of social importance is day by day becoming more and more a matter of wealth and riches. Modern society is given to luxury, and the avenues open to money are far greater than they were in any other age. To keep abreast of others in the outward display of life, in dress and living, has been and is, a source of difficulty to many households. Pleasure must be had at almost any price. Few young people will consent to lead quiet or humdrum lives; and sooner or later the racing pace must tell. The husband has the Turf, or numberless other expensive tastes which occupy him; the wife has society, and her dresses and household expenses to see to. Perpetual entertainment in London, on the river, and in the country, whether given or received, is likely to find the bottom of most moderate purses. Money worries beget other worries, and disagreements and recriminations come in their train. Home becomes uncomfortable and interests grow apart. Each sees the other's faults, and is blind to his or her own,

and soon friendship and confidence are given elsewhere. The rush of social life carries both onward, and they soon cease to care so long as self-denial is not called for on either side. Thus little by little the great and cynical maxim of La Rochefoucauld asserts itself : "La bonne société se compose toujours d'un tas de petits commencements d'adultère."

Such is the history and origin of the Professional Beauty. As a *culte* it has nothing in it to ennable either worshippers or worshipped. It is simply pleasure-worship in its most superficial and ephemeral form. It has nothing to redeem it as a manifestation of fixed taste or predilection. It can hardly be said to be immoral, for it commences with no moral precept. It is an existence not very different in many of its forms to what decaying societies of history have always been celebrated for, except that it is somewhat more blatantly vulgar and common. It is in fact only a little more trivial and, I might add, a little more *bourgeois* than the frivolities and inconsequences that existed in former generations.

WENTWORTH SANDYS.





A COURTIER UNDER LOUIS XVI

THE COMTE DE VAUDREUIL



The French Court, that throng of servants of every rank and degree which Louis XIV had focussed at Versailles, was dispersed by the events of the Revolution after a century of existence. During that period of its prosperity, the men who gave the tone to society were not themselves unaffected in their turn by the influences among which they lived, and it is curious to trace, alike in the courtier and the man of letters, the reflex action of the age he himself had modelled. Thus, under the *Grand Monarque* the courtier is either an arrogant favourite, hoisted into a position far above his merits, or a devotee to etiquette, carefully fitting his every foot-print into those of his masters, Villeroi or Dangeau. Under Louis XV we find him

transformed into a *roué* without passions, or an academician without orthography, like the Maréchal de Richelieu, that contemporary and accomplice of the vices of three generations. Finally, under Louis XVI, or rather Marie-Antoinette, he becomes the man of nice susceptibility, the patron of the fine arts, the writer of society verses, the master of exquisite compliments, the *fidus Achates* of the Comte d'Artois, the devoted knight of the Duchesse de Polignac; becomes, in a word, the gallant Vaudreuil, whose portrait we would fain sketch in the heyday of those social triumphs which coincided with the dying splendours of the old monarchy.

Joseph-Hyacinthe-François de Paule de Rigaud, Comte de Vaudreuil, belonged to an old Languedoc family, whose fame, more modern than its lineage, had been chiefly gathered by recent scions on the seas and in the colonies.

Born in San Domingo in 1740, he came to France at a very early age and entering the army, took part in most of the campaigns of the Seven Years' War. But after the conclusion of peace, he bade farewell to a military career, and we look in vain for his presence among the heroes of America and Russia, the dashing volunteers of York Town or Ismaila. His vocation was leading him in other paths, his ambitions were of a different order, and we find M. de Vaudreuil drawing near the age of forty, and still a unit in the brilliant throng that crowded the halls of Versailles.

The premature death of his parents had placed a great fortune in his hands. The large revenues from his West Indian plantations enabled him to be always liberal and sometimes magnificent. Even his Creole origin was an additional passport to social favour. Were not those the days when the great world was applauding *Alzire* and reading *Les Incas*, and when it was considered a distinction to be no-matter-how-distantly connected with America?

To such advantages as these, Vaudreuil added those personal qualities which society exacts in her favourites; a handsome presence, a dignified yet winning manner, charm and variety in conversation, and a knack of carrying *badinage* and gallantry to its utmost limits while preserving all the forms of a chivalrous respect. "There are only two men," said

the Princesse d'Hénin, "who know how to address a woman, Lekain on the stage, and M. de Vaudreuil in a drawing-room." Further, he read poetry well, told a story to perfection, and sang the fashionable melodies with much taste.

A chronicle of the day records Vaudreuil's *début* as a virtuoso, at the Maréchale de Luxembourg's, in a song the choice of which seemed somewhat of an impertinence, if not merely a blunder, but it records, too, his share in the costume quadrilles at the Court, and his successes as the rival of Molé on private stages at such houses as those of the Duc d'Orléans at Bagnolet, the Duchesse de Bourbon at Petit Bourg, and the Comte de Clermont at Berny. Grimm pronounces him the best amateur actor in Paris.

His politeness seemed only the outward expression of a natural kindness of heart. His good-nature was proverbial. He assiduously followed the advice of an old courtier of his day : "Speak well of every one," and bided his time to put in practice another sage maxim : "Never be afraid to ask!"

His opportunity came at last quite naturally.

The part played by the Polignacs at Louis' Court is a matter of history. A young lady of the provincial *noblesse*, Yolande de Polastron, Comtesse de Polignac, chanced to attract the favour and friendship of Marie-Antoinette. Created a duchess, and appointed governess to the Royal children, she ended by quartering herself with a whole train of friends and relatives upon the Royal couple. The women of her family were the first to profit by her good fortune. At the head of the list came the Comtesse Diane, a woman whose ugliness was obscured by the blaze of her wit, and who, in spite of her morals, was made a canoness, and lady in waiting to Madame Elisabeth. Then another sister-in-law, the languishing, sentimental Comtesse de Polastron, a divinity worshipped by the Comte d'Artois; then a daughter, the Duchesse de Guiche, also, if the gossips may be trusted, an object of some short-lived attentions from the prince.

The men of the company—I except the crafty and caustic Baron de Besenval—cut a less brilliant figure. M. de Polignac, a man of honour and honesty, according to his contemporaries, accepted his good luck

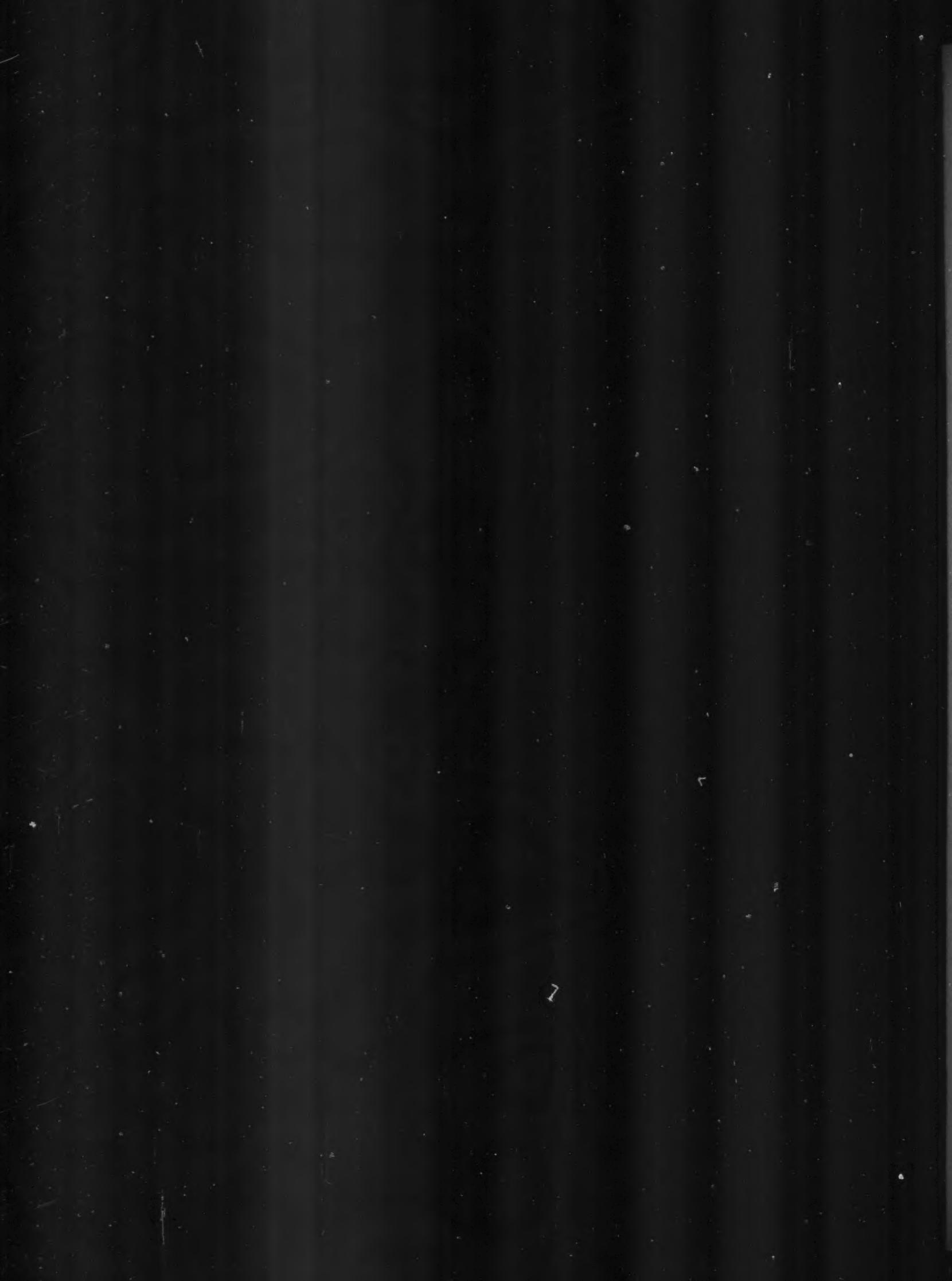
without any special efforts to justify it, and if he played a part at all, it was on the boards of the Trianon theatre, where he acted the heroine in pieces too risky for the co-operation of ladies. M. de Polastron is described as "a nonentity who plays the violin." M. d'Adhémar, the charming singer, soon disappeared amid the distant honours of a great embassy. The only strong individuality among them all was the brilliant cousin, Vaudreuil, who had the first place in the heart of the favourite of the Queen.

For many years, Madame de Polignac's charms had held discreet yet absolute sway over her young kinsman. A family legend, for the truth of which I cannot undertake to vouch, gave a very romantic colour to the beginning of the attachment.

Vaudreuil's sister, Madame de Duras, is said to have formed the project of marrying her brother to a distant cousin, Mademoiselle de Polastron, who, at the time, was still a child. She broached the idea to Vaudreuil, and persuaded him to pay a visit with her to the convent where the possible bride was being educated. But the little school-girl shewed no forecast of the seductive charm that was to distinguish her womanhood. At the close of the interview, Vaudreuil expressed himself in no very flattering terms concerning her, and with so little caution that his strictures were overheard by Mademoiselle! Of course there was no further question of the marriage. But some years afterwards Vaudreuil encountered at Versailles a lady whose grace and beauty took his heart by storm. Upon enquiring her name, he discovered to his amazement that she was no other than the despised cousin. From that day forth, he was her devoted lover, and the passion, soon to become a mutual one, never waned till the death of the woman who had inspired it. The reluctant wooer of Mademoiselle de Polastron vowed himself to celibacy in honour of Madame de Polignac, and wore his chains with all the fervour of a devotee, not only submissively, but proudly.

Whatever be the claims of this story to belief, it is certain that Vaudreuil was a close ally of his charming cousin, long before she became the all-powerful favourite of the Queen.

Their love story had a past to look back upon when he addressed to





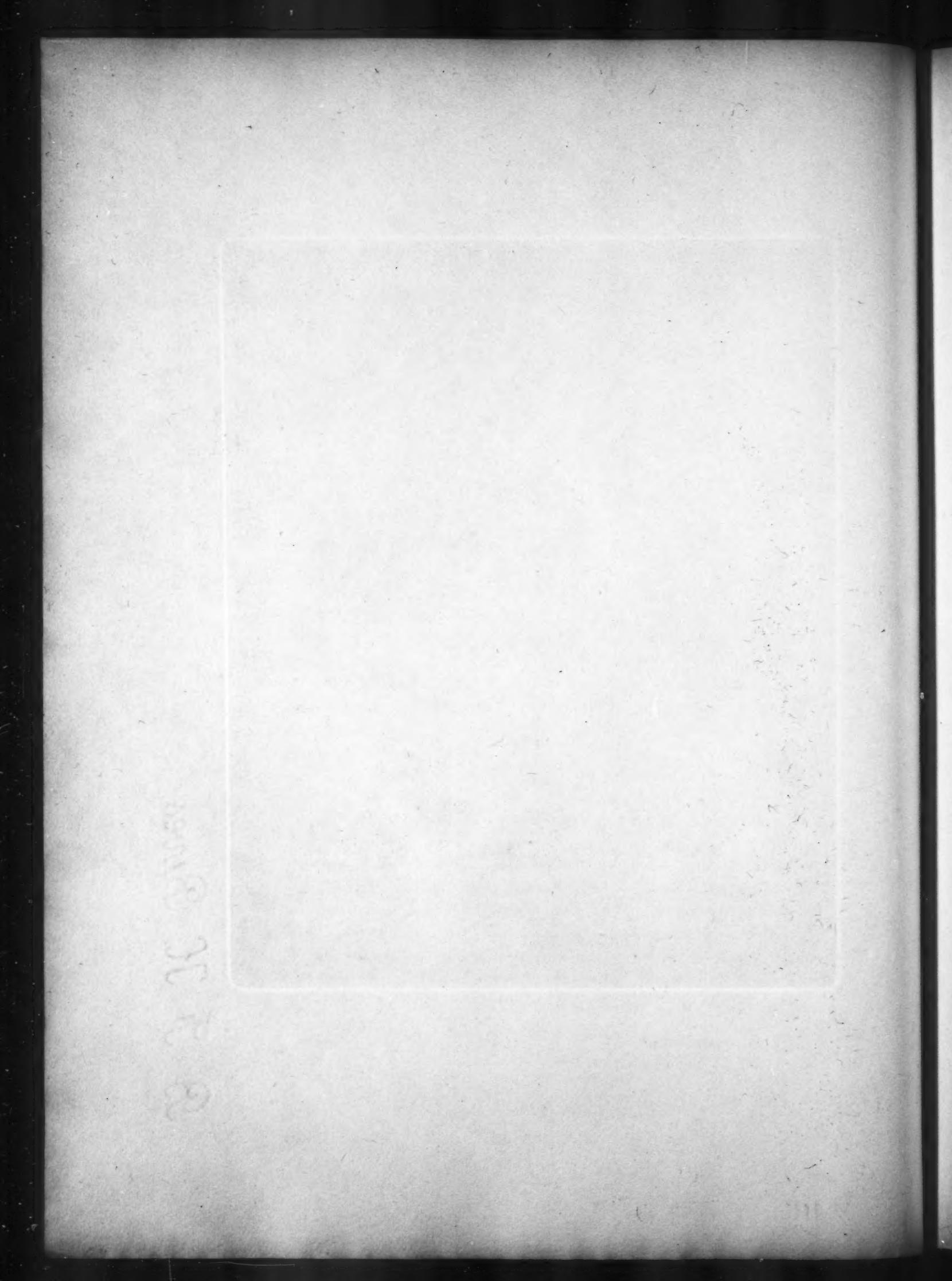
Engraved at Vienna by Fisher 1796.

In the collection of the late J. Doddell Esq.

Re-engraved by J. Smith, London.

THE DUCHESS OF POLIGNAC

Done from memory by Madame Le Brun.



her the following verses, in not very vigorous imitation of Voltaire's *Les Vous et les Tu.*

En voyant la foule importune
De ces courtisans empressés
Suivre et jalouser ta fortune,
Je pleure nos plaisirs passés,
Et ce bonheur pur et tranquille
De ton ancienne obscurité.
Nous avons quitté cet asile
Où sans faste et sans vanité,
Sans ambitions, sans caprices,
Tes grâces, ta naïveté,
Et tes talents et ta gaité
Chaque jour faisaient les délices
D'une aimable société.

Sûrs de nous voir le lendemain,
Nous nous séparions avec peine !
Tels étaient de chaque semaine
L'heureux emploi, le doux refrain, etc.

As to Vaudreuil himself, he first began to play a prominent part at Versailles about 1779, according to contemporary writers. On the 16th of October of that year, Mercy, who hitherto seems to have been hardly aware of his existence, writes to the Empress Maria Theresa of the important grant made to him through the intermediary of the Countess. The astute Creole, on the pretext that he was getting nothing from his American property owing to the war, had secured a government pension of thirty thousand *livres* to be paid yearly till the conclusion of peace. It is said that later, foreseeing a term to this easy source of income, he prudently bartered his yearly allowance for a landed estate. The first grant was due to the favour of the Queen; the second stroke of policy was worked through the Comte d'Artois. But this was not all. Shortly afterwards, his name appeared in a list of promotions to the rank of brigade-major, and he had further conferred on him a comfortable Court sinecure, the office of Grand Falconer. The Court no longer went a-hawking, and the new functionary's sole duty was to solemnly receive the ger-falcons sent as an offering by the King of Denmark, or such of the family as were occasionally despatched from Malta.

By the May of 1780, we find all Versailles delighting to do him honour. We may quote Grimm, among others : "The Comtesse de Polignac has just been delivered in Paris at the house of her greatest friend, the Comte de Vaudreuil, her own house being not quite ready for her reception. As soon as the news became known to the Queen, she not only hastened at once to the invalid, and spent the whole day at her bedside, but persuaded the King to remove with the Court to La Muette, that she might be able to pass as much time as possible with her friend..... The King has vied with the Queen in attentions. He visited the Countess himself on the third day after her confinement."

There can be little doubt that the favourite's kind host made his profit out of these unexpected visits. We find him presently decorated with the *cordon bleu*, and appointed honorary Governor of Lille citadel with a yearly salary of six thousand *livres*.

The friendship of a prince of the blood set the seal, as it were, to his series of Court favours. The brilliant rake who was then known as the Comte d'Artois was attracted to the camp of the Queen's allies by his dawning passion for Madame de Polastron. Vaudreuil, who sometimes found Madame de Polignac rebellious when he broached a fresh scheme of ambition or self-aggrandizement, was well pleased with the presence in her circle of a prince always ready to plead his cause. He had also accustomed himself to accept all Madame de Polignac's relations as his own, and for Madame de Polastron he had a calm and brotherly affection. Thanks to her, his relations with the Comte d'Artois became more and more familiar. In 1782 he volunteered to accompany the prince on his Spanish expedition. He was under fire with him in the trenches at the siege of Gibraltar, and the memory alike of common dangers and of common affections served to knit their friendship more closely than ever.

Sheltered thus by the Queen's friend and the King's brother, Vaudreuil quietly made himself an absolute ruler in his sphere. His was the leading spirit in the select and intimate society where Marie-Antoinette sought refuge from the enemies of Royalty. He was the all but acknowledged master of the *salon* in which the governess of the Royal children received

her mistress nearly every evening, and where the King himself, somewhat ill at ease, and plainly out of his element, endured and was endured. Finally, he was the leading character on the Trianon stage, literally, this time, be it understood. He played Colas in *Les Deux Chasseurs et la Laitière*, Richard in *Le Roi et le Fermier*, the Diviner in *Le Devin de Village*. The King pronounced his acting in the part of the jealous Dormilly in Barthe's *Les Fausses Infidélités* to be absolutely true to nature; and on the 19th of August, 1785, he made love for an hour or two, in the guise of Almaviva, to a Rosina who had the features of the Queen. The enemies of the "Austrian" were pleased to see in this something more than the frolic of an evening. Henceforth they added Vaudreuil's name to that list of apocryphal lovers on which Lauzun and Coigny already figured. Now, if there was one man at the Court who merited less than any other this distinction it was the Almaviva of Trianon. So far from being the Queen's lover, she had even a certain grudge against him. Marie-Antoinette felt instinctively that Vaudreuil had the first place in a heart she claimed for her own. Her almost unconscious resentment kept up a slight, but perpetual friction between herself and her imperious subject. The day was even to come when their mutual misunderstanding, embittered by political complications, should lead to a serious breach.

Meantime Vaudreuil, for a personage who was not in favour with Her Majesty, certainly exercised an extraordinary influence on his surroundings. He meddled little in grave affairs of State, and had no weighty ideas touching the art of government wherewith to enrich his party. He loved his ease too much, was too convinced an Epicurean, to trouble himself about such matters. But his hand made itself felt in everything, and his power was not less real and far-reaching, because occult, ill-defined, and irresponsible. "The slave of this planter," said Michelet, in his picturesque and savage diction, "was the Polignac, whose slave was the Queen, whose slave was the King."

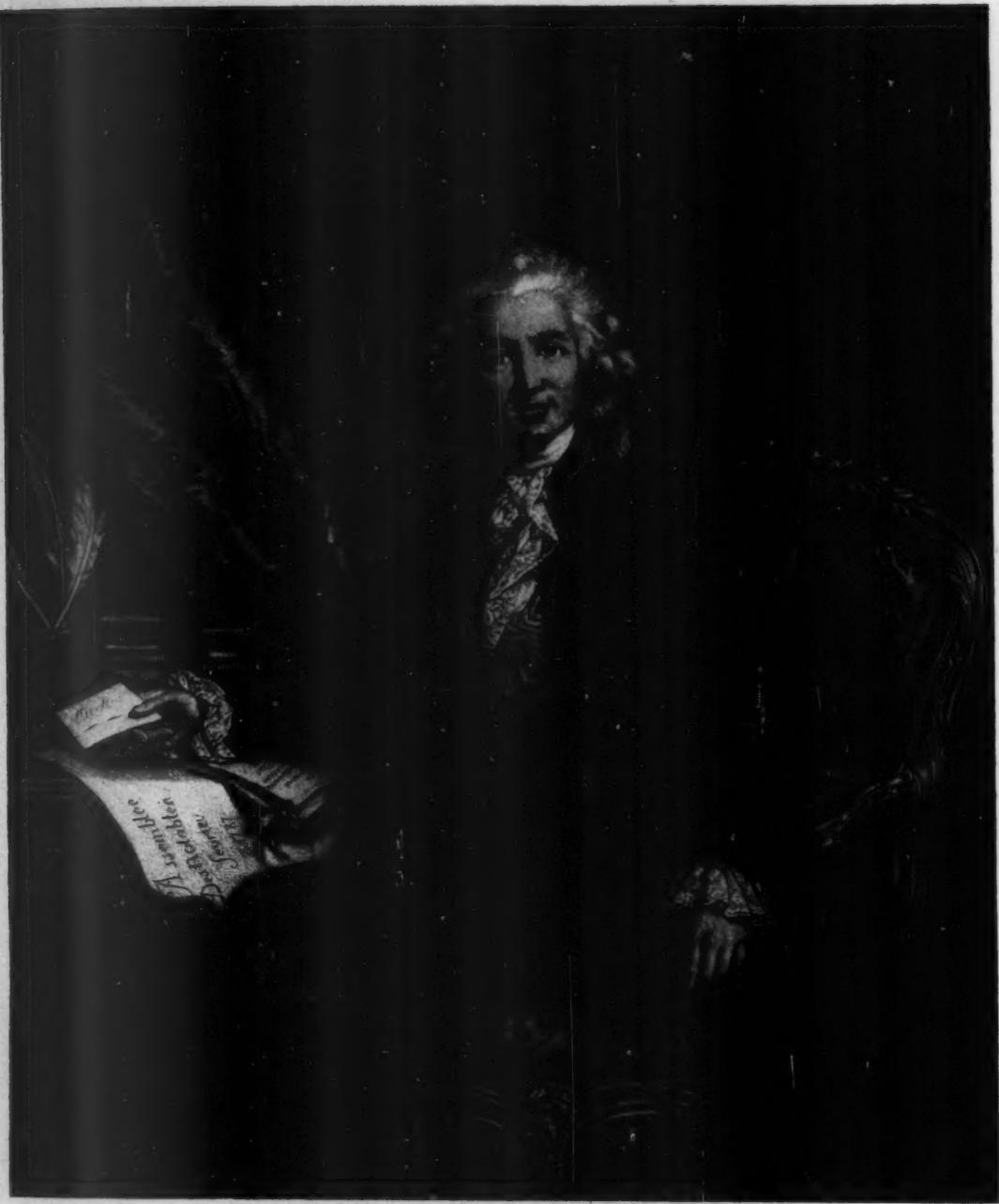
But though indifferent to the larger aspects of administration and policy, Vaudreuil took an intense interest in personal questions and in Court intrigues. He aspired to stand, an arbiter of fates, between a harpsichord and a backgammon table, and in the frequent ministerial changes of the

period, the name he had whispered to the Queen, by means of the favourite, generally communicated itself to the lips of the King. He almost succeeded in handing over the portfolio of Naval Minister to the head of his house, the Marquis de Vaudreuil; failing which, he procured the disgrace of the Prince de Montbarey, the Minister of War, who had refused him certain lucrative reversions coveted by himself or some of his needy relatives; and Ségur and Castries owed something in their elevation to this successful wire-puller.

His influence was still more strongly felt in the intrigues that raised Calonne to the Comptroller-Generalship of Finance, and bolstered him up for several years. Joining forces with the Keeper of the Seals, the Lieutenant of Police, and a large faction in the Court, he directed the manœuvres of the party favourable to the minister, as opposed to the shattered remnant of the Choiseulites, who supported Necker. When there was a talk of putting the Marquis de Vaudreuil on his trial for his conduct at the naval battle of Les Saintes, his kinsman thought himself strong enough to interfere with authority. It was reported that in an interview with the Maréchal de Castries, he became so imperiously insistent that the Marshal rebuked him with, "You seem to forget, sir, that you are speaking to a Marshal of France and a Minister of the King!" "I am not likely to forget it," retorted Vaudreuil, "seeing it was I who made both. It is rather *your* memory that is at fault."

From Calonne, who held the keys of the Treasury, he seems to have expected services in accordance with such an office. In those days a man of rank thought of little beyond the keeping up of his state; he would have held it beneath his dignity to have attempted any such balancing of expenditure and revenue as Necker had vainly striven to introduce in the budget. When pestered by creditors, he took refuge in loans. He first addressed himself to his friends, for, as Vaudreuil was fond of declaring, "Offering, giving, and accepting, are all the same thing among real friends." When the friends themselves happened to be in difficulties, as was often the case, the embarrassed *seigneur* did some financier the honour of requesting his services. If all other means failed, was there not the public exchequer to fall back upon, that inexhaustible treasure-



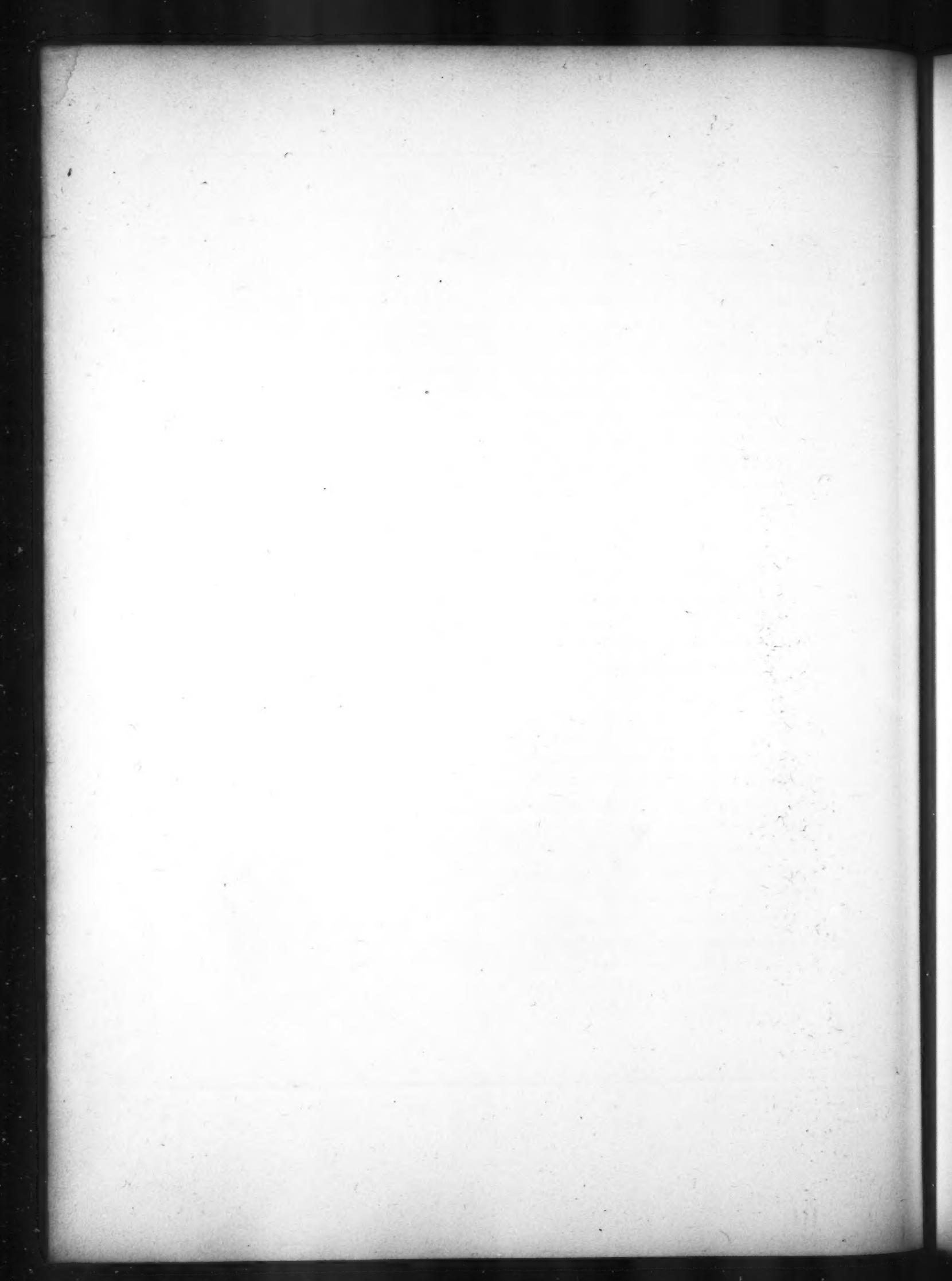


M^r Le Brun pinc.

De Brebi sculp^t

MONSIEUR DE CALONNE

Ministre d'état sous Louis XVI.



house of gratuities, pensions, or as it was euphemistically called, *benevolences*. Vaudreuil, who was in the habit of giving magnificent dinners and entertainments, who was the providence of his numerous kinsfolk, disdained either to regulate his expenditure or to restrict his loans. Circumstances of which we have no knowledge had brought about a hopeless confusion in his money matters so early as 1784. He had to appeal to the King's kindness, to work upon Calonne's good-nature, and to obtain an advance of 1,200,000 *livres*. But this sum was insufficient, and he made up his mind to part with some of his pictures. Louis again helped him indirectly by buying several of these at high prices. Two years later, being called upon to refund 600,000 *livres* for which he had given a bill, he sued for a writ of suspension, but was refused, his debt not having been contracted in accordance with legal forms. He then had recourse to Calonne, but the minister, stirred by some lingering scruple, begged the Comte d'Artois to advance the sum required, and having eased his mind by thus securing himself, sent off the money to Vaudreuil on the morrow. "Every one was satisfied," says the chronicler of the transaction, "and Calonne's detractors had not a word to say on the matter."

But in spite of his irregularities and indiscretions, Vaudreuil must be acquitted of any desire to enrich himself by means of Royal or ministerial favour. He differs in this respect from certain *parvenus* of a modern democracy. He spent and gave just as he asked and received, with a royal magnificence. It cannot be said that he opposed a base and sordid calculation to the liberality of his masters. If his imprudence sometimes forced him to appear indelicate, he was never venal. And in a certain sense, his rectitude amounted to fanaticism, "after the American fashion," as Besenval said, who did not love him. Beaumarchais presented himself one day at his *lever*, full of a scheme for floating some marvellous financial bubble; he offered Vaudreuil a rich share of the spoils if he would consent to patronize the affair. "Sir," replied the Count, "you have just come at the right moment for yourself, for I have had a very good night, and never felt better in my life. If you had happened to call yesterday, I should have had you thrown out of that window."

If this spendthrift had been only one of the most brilliant of the

Versailles parasites, history would have had little reason to record his name. But it is by his doings outside the Court that he claims attention, and to a certain extent, indulgence. Like many of his friends, he mixed freely with the true kings of his time, the artists and men of letters. In this again he paid homage to the powers in the ascendant; but he little dreamt, when he bowed before these strange gods, that he was preparing the ruin of the temple that sheltered his own fortunes. Thanks to him, and to others like him, the fusion of the enlightened classes began to work in the direction of that fusion of orders which the law completed in 1789. It commenced by the amalgamation of the nobility, the financiers, and the intellectual workers, drawn together by their several attractions of high-breeding, wealth, and genius. Vaudreuil owed his very existence to the Court; but when once he threw off the influences of his frivolous existence, like some garment in which he had been masquerading for a night, he appeared as a true son of nature, giving himself up to marvellous visions of the future, or carrying his mind back, on the wings of kindred imaginations, to primeval equality, and the Age of Gold. "The rarity of genuine feeling is so great," he once observed, "that when I come from Versailles, I find myself stopping in the street to see a dog gnaw a bone."

Thus, while in the eyes of one party, Vaudreuil represented not only the product, but the very type and incarnation of abuses and corruption, in those of another he figured as a "Liberal," which in fact he was, in every sense of the word. He showered benefits on his equals and his inferiors in like measure as he himself received them, without stint, without any thought of a day of reckoning to come. "I have given to so many," he said later on, when he was tasting all the miseries of expatriation, "that some one may well give to me for the rest of my life." His dependents and flatterers hailed him Mæcenas, and nicknamed him "The Magician." In every society he frequented he was equally at his ease, and equally sure to charm. He was a constant visitor at the splendid mansion La Reynière had raised in the Champs-Élysées; he was one of the guests at the little Thursday dinners instituted by another farmer-general, Boutin, at Tivoli. One day we find him accepting Buffon's solemn

hospitality at the Jardin des Plantes; the next, frolicking with a merry company under the Provost Lepelletier de Morfontaine's free and easy roof. But his favourite resort was the *salon* of the fashionable painter, Madame Vigée-Lebrun.

There, the happy courtier knew what it was to be courted in his turn. The mistress of the house had a weakness for him that she unconsciously betrays in her *Souvenirs*, by her perpetual references to him. In her company, he measured wits with some of the most brilliant talkers of the day, the Prince de Ligne, the Marquis de Chastellux, the Abbé Delille, and if he had to choose between a ball given by the Queen, and one of Madame Lebrun's receptions, the artist generally gained the day. It was when *Le Jeune Anacharsis* was at the height of its popularity that one evening, on entering the Lebrun *salon*, he found the whole company costumed as Greeks, the poet Lebrun crowned with the laurels of Pindarus, the Marquis de Cubières armed with a guitar transformed for the nonce into a lyre, the ladies draped as muses or *canephoræ*. Singing a chorus of Gluck's, they led him to a table spread with Cyprian wine, with honey of Hymettus, and grapes of Corinth. These archæological *agapæ* made some noise in society. They were scarcely considered extravagant in a *salon* which was scoffed at by the profane as a *bureau littéraire*, or rather an Academy of Fine Art, aspiring to judge, pronounce, and grant awards in intellectual matters.

It may be easily imagined in what fashion Vaudreuil returned all this hospitality, either at his house in Paris, or his country seat at Gennevilliers, where he had succeeded the Maréchal de Richelieu. Gennevilliers was nothing of a building, but it stood in the midst of a level country abounding in game, and possessed a beautiful little theatre. The Comte d'Artois was attracted by the sport, others by the suppers, those crowning delights of philosophical epicureanism. Among the guests, side by side with churchmen whom it would be an excess of charity to call worldly, and with fine gentlemen turned metaphysicians, such as the Abbé de Périgord and the Comte de Choiseul-Gouffier, we find scientists, men of letters, chemists such as Sage, architects such as Brongniart, singers such as Cailleau and Garat. There, Chamfort composed *bouts-rimés* in honour of the most

distinguished visitors, or recited verses on the occasion of his host's birthday. Madame Vigée-Lebrun shared the stage of the little theatre with Madame Dugazon. And even among so many stars, the master of the house shone in anecdote, in song, in social gossip, for like many of his contemporaries, he prided himself on being versed in every phase alike of pleasure and of elegant knowledge.

Art claimed a large share of his attention, and opened a wide field to his prodigal inclinations. The two fashionable painters of the day, Madame Vigée-Lebrun and Joseph Vernet, enjoyed his patronage. The one painted his portrait, the other contributed several important landscapes to his gallery. His rooms were littered with costly furniture, rare china, Japanese lacquer, enamels by Petitot, curiosities of every description. His collection of pictures was famous. Many of its most brilliant gems, examples of the Flemish and Dutch schools, have since passed into the great storehouse of the Louvre.

His liberality was not restricted to painters. His munificence extended to many other branches of art. The envious declared him to be a sham connoisseur, a mock Mæcenas, scheming for the post held by M. d'Angiviller, the director-generalship of architecture. Several times a rumour went forth that he had secured the prize. D'Angiviller himself began to feel uneasy, and was not slow to do his rival an ill turn if occasion offered. A project, forwarded by the lord of Gennevilliers, for the erection of a monument in commemoration of the first balloon ascent, was decisively quashed by d'Angiviller. Vaudreuil took a lofty revenge some few months later. He was asked to interest himself in obtaining from d'Angiviller a supplementary pension for Chaudet, the young laureate of the *Académie des Beaux-Arts*. "Why should I ask any one else for the money?" was his reply. And he promptly bound himself to allow Chaudet a sum of 200 *livres* a year as long as the artist should be studying in Rome. The theatre shared his bounties. Cailleau and Garat were among the many who received benefits from him. For the one he obtained a little property, and the post of forest ranger at Saint-Germain; the other he introduced to the Queen's concerts, and procured for him the sinecure of secretary to the Comte d'Artois. Further, when a new place was

created (that of Manager of the Government Lotteries), Vaudreuil caused the emoluments to be fixed at 6,000 *livres*, and secured the post for his *protégé*.

Among the men of letters, he had not only dependents, but friends. He was himself a poet, as eighteenth-century France reckoned poets; that is to say, he had a pretty taste in the turning of rhymed compliments, chiefly in octosyllabic verse. He made some essays too, in the writing of songs and fables, and his habit of rhyming clung to him even in old age and exile. Among his manuscripts were found four comedies of distressing mediocrity, not to say puerility. His poetic achievements are, in truth, those of an amateur, and are best left in obscurity; on the other hand, all honour is due to him for his disinterested sympathy with the men of letters of his day, and for the encouragement he gave them. Vigée, a poet, and one of the performers at the Count's theatre, owed him two places. The first, that of private secretary to Madame, gave him position; the second, the Comptrollership of the Sinking Fund, carried with it more solid benefits. To Ecouchard-Lebrun Vaudreuil was also the most generous and ingenious of patrons. He cried up his verses at the Court, and in the town, and when he heard that the poet had been ruined by the bankruptcy of the Prince de Rohan-Guéménée, he sent him anonymously a large chest full of clothes and linen, and extorted a pension of two thousand crowns for him from Calonne. Finding one day a copy of Horace forgotten and left on the table by Lebrun, he forwarded it to him with a little rhymed note, which drew forth the following graceful reply :

Une Grâce, une Muse en effet m'a remis
Les jolis vers dictés par le dieu du Parnasse
Au plus céleste des amis,
A Mécène-Vaudreuil, qui chante comme Horace.
Eh quoi ! l'ennui des cours n'a donc rien qui vous glace !
Quoi ! votre luth brillant n'est jamais détendu !
Vous puisez dans votre âme un art divin de plaire,
Et vous joignez toujours le bien dire au bien faire.
Horace avec plaisir chez vous s'était perdu :
Vous en avez si bien l'esprit et le langage,
Que, par un charmant badinage,
Vous me l'avez deux fois rendu.

To this effusion Lebrun-Pindar added the following postscript :

"If the Benevolent Magician continues to earn new styles and titles every day, I shall be driven to invent another word for gratitude, which will presently be all too insufficient."

Chamfort was another who owed much to the friend of the Polignacs, and for many years was content to be his daily guest and chief source of relaxation. Vaudreuil it was who persuaded the philosopher to drop the name of Nicolas, which recalled the stain on his birth. He furnished him with board and lodging, and got him some easy secretarial post in Madame Elisabeth's household. On one occasion, when Chamfort was overwhelmed by a cruel domestic grief, Vaudreuil carried him off on a journey to Holland, partly to distract his mind from his troubles, partly to enjoy his society. The atrabilious writer was fain to spare the author of so much delicate flattery. He even writes thus of him : "Nothing could be more tender, more perfect, than his friendship. He finds it easy to credit one with talent, merit, even with genius, and it seems to him right and natural that a man should have public honours bestowed on him on those grounds, even if he be neither a minister nor an ambassador, nor the head clerk of such a functionary. In his attitude on such points, he foreshadows the no longer distant day when quacks and charlatans shall find that their reign is past."

Superficially regarded, Vaudreuil's relations with philosophers and thinkers seem surprising enough, for they brought him face to face with minds most hostile to the well-springs of his prosperity, of his existence even. Yet in such society he seems, for his part, to have become as oblivious of the intellectual gulf between himself and his friends, as of the social one. He deliberately shut eyes and ears to the true significance of their covert attacks with pen and tongue upon the established order. "Do you not see," said Marie-Antoinette, to whom he had been reading an ode of Lebrun's against courtiers, "how this man is stripping us of our robes?" Chamfort, though sincere enough in his praises of Vaudreuil, protested that it was the man and not the courtier, to whom he was attached, and affected to confer favours by accepting them. Urged by a petty susceptibility, he frequently refused benefits that would have made him feel his social inferiority, and the smallest hurt to his self-love would

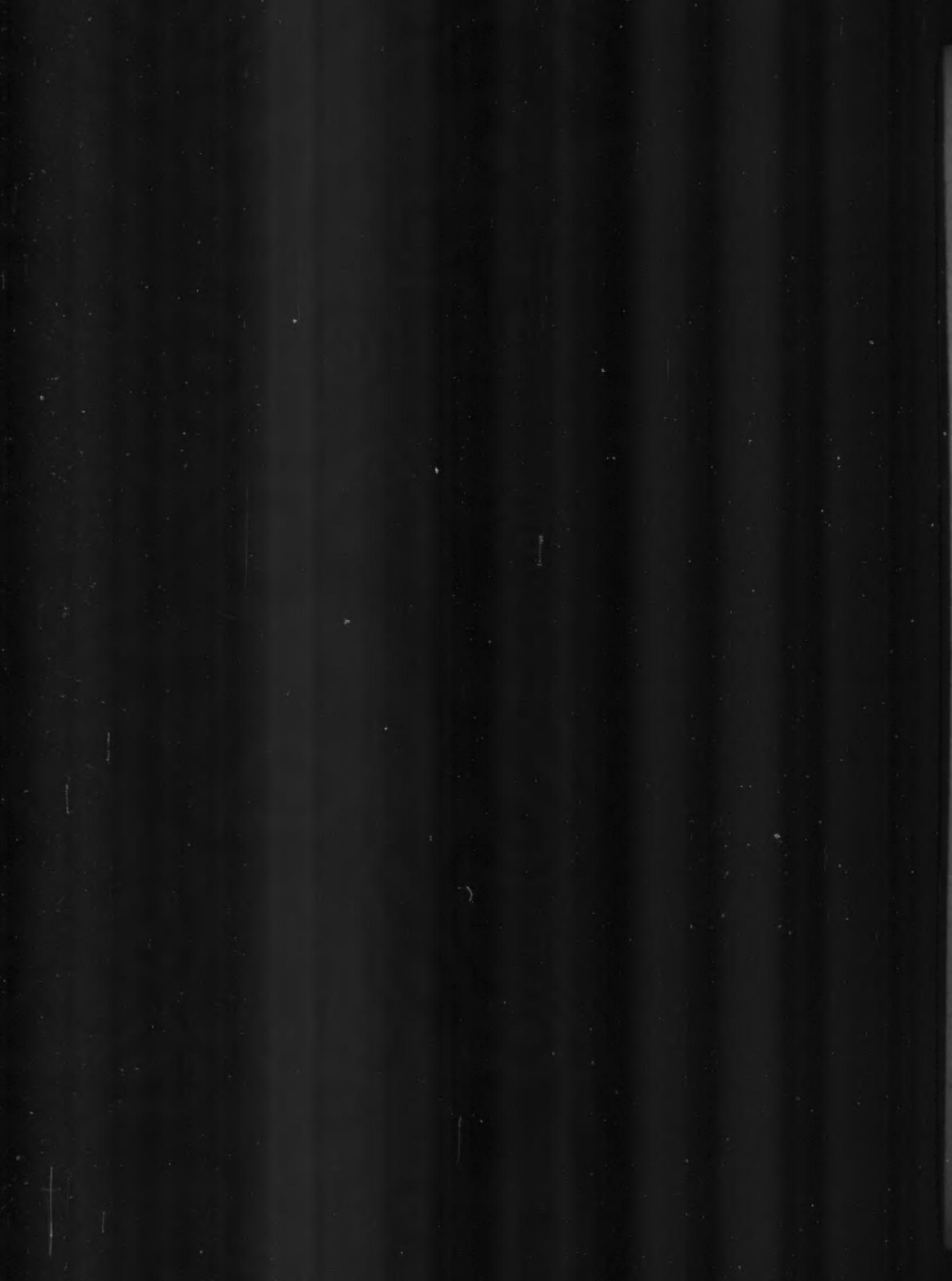
put him on his dignity. By a liberty of speech verging on insolence, he contrived to remind his patron of that law of inequality between a lord of the Court, and a lord of Parnassus, which the superior in social rank was, in this instance, ready enough to disregard. Vaudreuil one day reproached him with his want of confidence in his friends. "You are not rich," he said, "and you forget your friends." "I promise you," retorted Chamfort, "that I will borrow twenty-five louis from you as soon as you have paid your debts." Here spoke the man, who, passing a group of porters on the quays of Amsterdam, exclaimed to Vaudreuil : "What are all the nobles in the world compared with these people!" The mournful moralist saw in his friend one of the principal types of the decadence; his eyes fixed moodily upon the familiar model, he evolved and formulated his bitter reflections on courts and courtiers. "The gratitude one feels to any of the class," he muttered, as if anxious to harden his heart against remembered kindness, "is of the same order as that inspired by the dentist, who delivers one from acute pain, but hurts one horribly in the process." Vaudreuil, partly out of good-nature, partly out of frivolity, felt nothing but amusement at these epigrams. His attitude in such matters is best exemplified by his conduct among memorable events connected with another writer.

The struggles between Beaumarchais and the government over the *Mariage de Figaro* are so well known that we need not here dwell upon their history. Louis XVI had heard the piece read. He understood its significance, and steadily opposed its representation. "If we allow that play to be acted," he declared, "we shall have to demolish the Bastille." But the Polignac faction had coalesced with the idlers of Paris, and the King's feeble will gave way before their onset. It is reasonable to suppose that Vaudreuil had a good deal to do with the change of front that made it possible to mount the obnoxious piece at the Théâtre des Menus, in June, 1783, on the occasion of a *fête* given to one of the King's brothers. At the last moment, an order was sent to forbid the representation, but the evil day was only deferred. Three months later, the piece was acted before a select audience at the Gennevilliers theatre. Vaudreuil had invited the Comte d'Artois to hunt, Madame de Polignac and her party to sup.

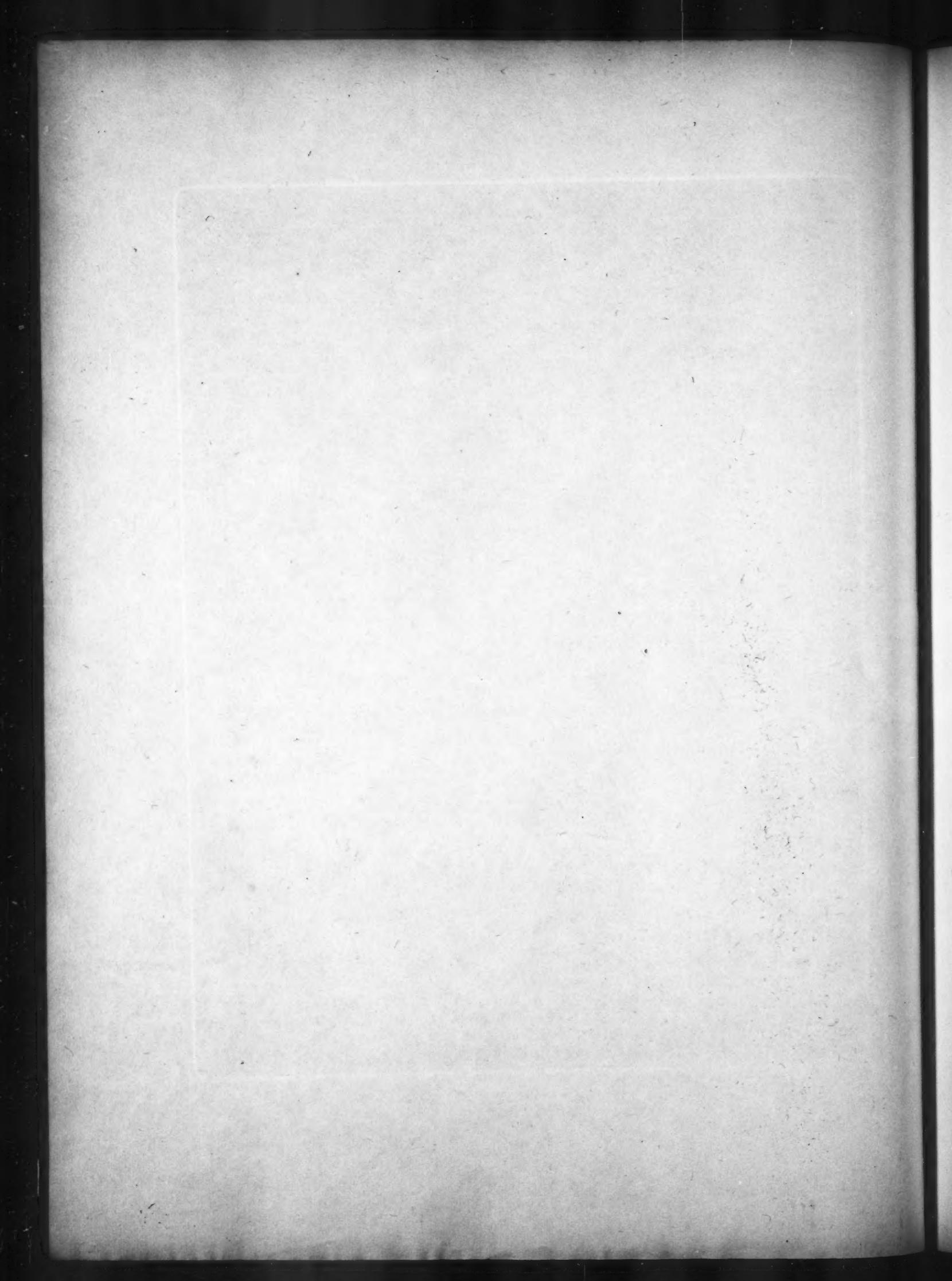
What more piquant close could he have derived for the entertainment than a play that was under official ban, and that no one had ever seen on any stage? Many were the obstacles to be overcome, but Vaudreuil was undaunted. "Without the *Mariage de Figaro*, there is no salvation," he wrote, in burlesque despair. He had to bargain with Beaumarchais, to bend the King to his wishes. At last, towards the end of September, 1783, he stood sponsor to the famous comedy, Beaumarchais himself assisting. During the evening, the heat became overpowering, and to give more air to the company, he broke one of the windows with his cane. It was not the only barrier he shattered that night. "*Figaro*" triumphed. It was in vain that the guests of Gennevilliers declared the piece to be utterly immoral, unfit to be included in the repertory. The public clamoured for the same privilege they had enjoyed, and soon Vaudreuil had the satisfaction, or the chagrin, of feeling that he had opened the doors of the Comédie-Française to Beaumarchais' redoubtable masterpiece. Five years later, the Bastille fell, as the King had predicted, and the courtier who had unconsciously helped to pull it down, was himself one of the first victims of the overthrow.

The ancient monarchy, betrayed by its natural allies, was tottering to its fall. Its last crisis took place in that spring of 1787 when Calonne's reign came unexpectedly to an end. After that shock it may be said to have breathed, but never to have moved again. And with it Vaudreuil's star was setting at Versailles.

The most intimate and the most prominent of the favourite's friends, he could not fail to share the hatred directed against her. Among the lesser courtiers, envy and detraction wreaked their rage upon him. His faults assumed gigantic proportions. He was an arrogant hypocrite, a self-assertive irresponsible, governed only by his own frivolous caprices, eager to meddle in matters beyond his powers, unscrupulous in intrigue. His conversation was declared to be intolerably egotistical, his vanity beyond bounds. Further, he was domineering, passionate, easily offended; he respected no one. He was insolent to the Queen's confidants, the Baron de Breteuil and the Abbé de Vermond; he had even forgotten himself in the Queen's own presence, and had greatly incensed her by







breaking, in a fit of rage, an artistically carved billiard cue, which she prized.

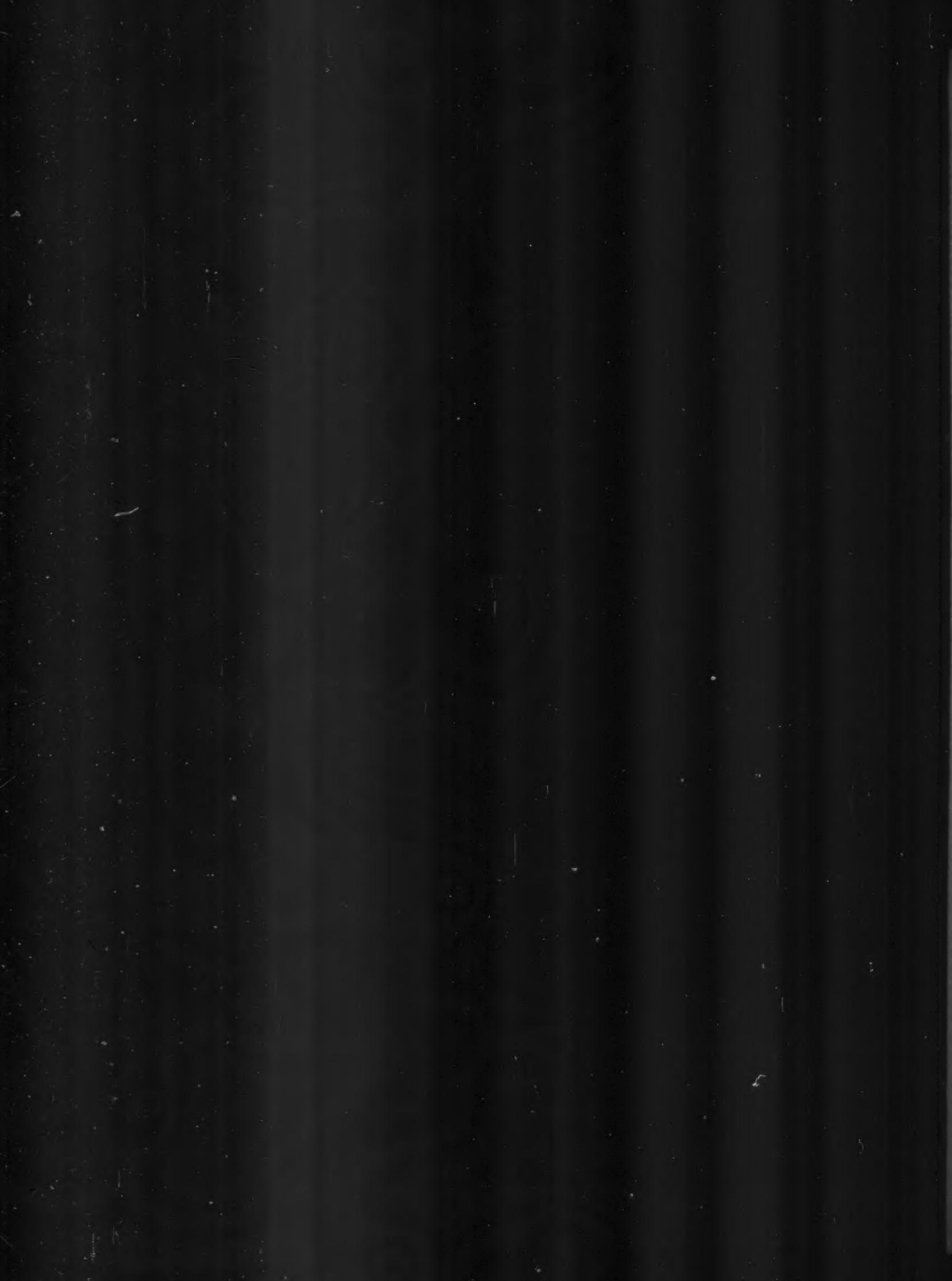
Vaudreuil might have braved his calumniators; but he was powerless against the growing jealousy and distrust with which he inspired his sovereign. Marie-Antoinette, who so keenly appreciated the charms of friendship for herself, was not fond of her friends' friends. And Vaudreuil was obnoxious to her in other ways. She could not forgive him his share in the production of *Le Mariage de Figaro*, his audacious espousal of Cardinal de Rohan's cause in the affair of the Diamond Necklace, and his presumption in aspiring to the post of greatest trust in the Royal household, that of governor to her children.

It was, of course, Vaudreuil she had in her mind when she spoke to her friend of the displeasure she felt at meeting "certain persons" in her circle, and Madame de Polignac, stung out of her habitual gentleness, retorted : "I cannot allow that the honour your Majesty does me in frequenting my society gives you a right to exclude my friends." The Queen forbore to insist, but henceforth, before visiting Madame de Polignac, she took the precaution of enquiring who was with her, and it is probable that, finding the enemy frequently in possession, she herself began to figure less often in the favourite's *salon*.

Such were the somewhat strained relations between the Queen and her intimates, when the storm burst which overwhelmed Calonne. (April, 1787.) Vaudreuil exerted himself in vain to support the minister. He himself was compromised and dragged down in the fall. It seemed prudent for him to accompany the Polignacs to England, on the pretext of drinking the waters at Bath. Public opinion assigned other motives for the journey. The true and sufficient one was that in a policy of temporary self-effacement and quiescence lay the only hope of the long dominant *coterie*. On his return, Vaudreuil found his position very much changed. Calonne's papers had proved that the Count had been guilty of grave breaches of the public trust. He was convicted of having drawn nearly a million from the exchequer, without any sort of justification for so doing. His office of Head Falconer was at once abolished, and the bankruptcy of the financier Saint-James, who usually found funds for him, completed the difficulty

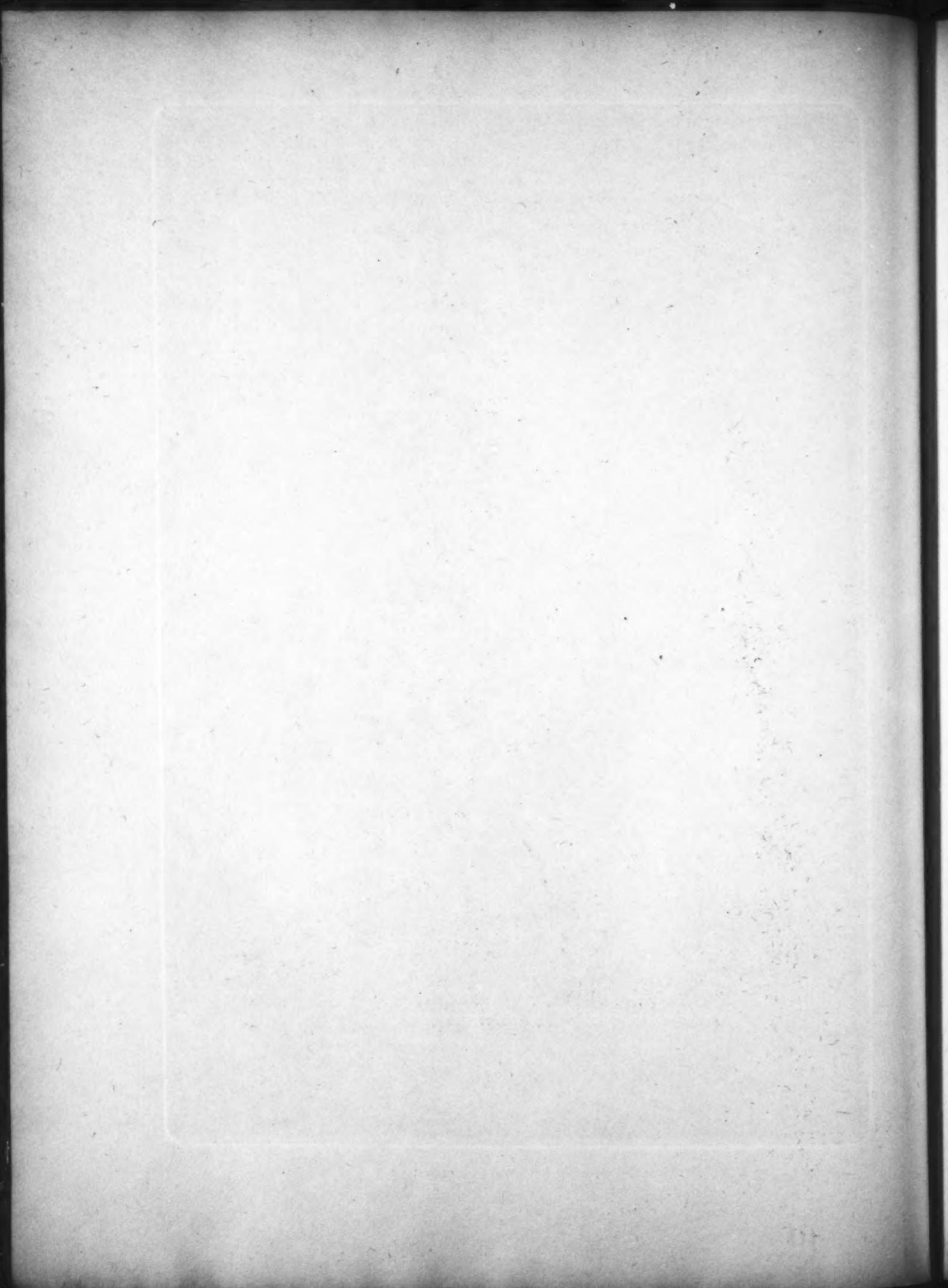
of his position. He had some faint hopes at first that the King would come to his aid, but Louis had declared himself with regard to Vaudreuil and his friends. "Let them pay for themselves," he said. "I will no longer be responsible for their follies." From the Queen there was of course nothing to be expected.

It is not known how Vaudreuil shook off his embarrassments. A proposal made by him to give up his American property to the King, on condition that the usufruct should be reserved to him, and that his debts should be paid, was not favourably received. In this extremity, he sold Gennevilliers to the Duc d'Orléans, parted with a second series of pictures and valuables, and got the King to take his furniture as it stood, for a considerable sum. While this partial liquidation was going on, Vaudreuil escaped from his enemies and creditors, and went to end the year and forget his vexations in Rome, at the Cardinal de Bernis' "Vigna." We find him back again in Paris at the close of 1788, where, though relegated to the back wings of the political theatre, he began once more to play a part. Chamfort who, three years before, had at his instigation written an irreverent pamphlet against the high clergy, seemed to him fitted to serve his hostility against the Third Estate. When it was contemplated to modify the composition of the States General, Vaudreuil desired Chamfort again to help him with his pen, and to combat the proposed innovations, for he perfectly understood that the doubling of the members of the Third Estate would decide the fate of the privileged classes, and he burned to attack the innovation. But Chamfort was not to be impressed for this campaign, which he described as a "collision of interests between twenty-four millions of men, and seven hundred thousand privileged persons. I entreat of you," he added, "in the name of my affectionate friendship for you, not to identify yourself in too marked a manner with the opponents of this measure. I know and appreciate your truest instincts, but I know also by what influences you will be drawn to espouse the antipopular cause." Other *protégés* of Vaudreuil's proclaimed their defection still more openly. Ginguené recited an ode in his presence at one of Madame Lebrun's receptions, which, as the artist herself afterwards declared, might have passed for a programme of 1793. That haughty society, which had claimed





M. Le Baron de Bezenval.



exemption even from moral obligations, was soon to be placed outside the pale of the law by the jealousy of some and the fury of others.

Who could have foreseen such an upheaval? Not certainly the members of the Court. "We were all novices," said Vaudreuil long afterwards, speaking of the events of 1789, "we had never seen a revolution. It is easy to acknowledge the necessity for dykes *after* an inundation, but who thinks of raising them on the eve of the catastrophe?" He appears to have foreseen no more sweeping change than such a ministerial shifting of the kaleidoscope as might drive out Necker into nothingness, and perhaps restore Calonne. The concessions made by Louis, and formulated in the Declaration of the 23rd of June, appeared to Vaudreuil a capitulation. Suddenly awakened to the danger of the throne, he saw that the democratic party was ripe for revolt, and would probably meet the King's proclamation to the States-General by fresh demands. Hurrying to the Palace with a few friends, he prepared to defend the Queen's person, if necessary. He was coldly received and thanked for his zeal. "We have no further need of protection. The King has conceded more than could possibly have been hoped from him. Our enemies are disarmed, harmony will be restored." "Might I venture to enquire of the Queen," asked Vaudreuil, "whether Monsieur Necker has followed the King to the Assembly?" "No; but why this question?" "Because, if proceedings are not at once instituted against the First Minister, the Monarchy will be overthrown to-morrow." Marie-Antoinette could see in this speech only the indication of some fresh intrigue, or at best, an expression of personal passion. With a severe gesture, she dismissed the officious counsellor, who, as he retired, bowing low, uttered these parting words : "I see with pain that I have incurred the Queen's displeasure, but I cannot hesitate when I have to choose between my duty and her favour."

Twenty days later, the situation had become still more alarming. The revolt foretold by Vaudreuil dominated all Paris, and threatened Versailles itself. Among the first victims of popular vengeance were the Comte d'Artois, the Polignacs, and all their circle. After the taking of the Bastille, Louis and Marie-Antoinette felt themselves powerless to protect their adherents. The King ordered his brother, the Queen her friend, to leave

instantly, to quit the Court and the kingdom with all possible speed. It was hurriedly arranged that the fugitives should travel by different routes, so as to attract less attention. The Comte d'Artois was to make for the Netherlands, the Polignacs for Basle and Switzerland. For an instant, Vaudreuil wavered between his two allegiances. Which should he follow, his prince or his cousin? The former seemed likely to encounter greater dangers. Vaudreuil decided to share them.

On the night of the 16th and 17th of July, the Royal couple took a mournful farewell of their friends, the hearts of all filled with heavy forebodings as to the future. Vaudreuil profited by the general emotion. His Royal mistress not only restored him to favour, but made him a sort of reparation that went far to soften the bitterness of his exile. He shall describe the scene in his own words. "Approaching the Queen, I dropped on one knee, and murmured some broken words of farewell. She bent her face towards mine, and I felt her tears on my forehead. 'Vaudreuil,' she whispered, in an unsteady voice, a voice that I can never forget, 'you were right. Necker is a traitor, and we are lost.' I gazed up at her in terror. Her face had already regained its expression of resigned serenity. The woman had shown me her heart for a moment; to the rest she was still the sovereign."

A few hours later, the Comte d'Artois, accompanied by Vaudreuil, by the captain of his Guards, by Hénin, and by his equerry, Grailly, left Versailles on horseback, and reached the forest of Chantilly by unfrequented roads. There he obtained a carriage belonging to the Prince de Condé, whose arms had been hastily effaced from the panels. He passed the first stage in safety, and at once took the road to Valenciennes. The frontier was crossed without difficulty, and at Namur, where they spent a few days, the prince and his friends drew rein. They then passed into Switzerland, and joining the Polignacs in a country house at Gummelingen, near Berne, they resolved to await the issue of events. The expedition, entered upon with so much sorrowful emotion, seemed to resolve itself into a pleasure-trip, and in truth, this first episode of their exile was the least painful in their twenty-five years' probation.

We will not follow Vaudreuil through all its vicissitudes. His character

was not sensibly modified by them. He retained in his exile the ideas, the habits, the affections that had marked his career as a courtier. From 1789 to 1792 he lived at Rome and Venice with the Polignacs. Artois was meanwhile at Turin, weaving the first threads of that endless and impotent intrigue which may be summed up in two words : The Emigration. Guided by the Cardinal de Bernis, Vaudreuil at first endeavoured to reserve the initiative in all matters relating to what his party called "the salvation of the monarchy," for the Royal prisoners at the Tuileries. His correspondence, which is shortly to be published, contains important details bearing upon this point. But after he joined the Comte d'Artois, we find the clear-sighted and courageous friend swallowed up in the courtier. Vaudreuil became one of the leaders of the Coblenz *enragés*; and when the campaign of 1792 had shattered his wild hopes, he rejoined the Polignacs at Vienna. The death of the Duchess in 1793, the inertia, voluntary or inevitable, of the Comte d'Artois, were cruel blows, striking him through his dearest affections and most cherished illusions. At the age of fifty, he resolved to seek balm for his wounds in the joys of domestic life. His young cousin, Joséphine-Victoire de Vaudreuil, accepted his hand in September, 1795, and the pair settled in England, living sometimes at the little Court established by Artois at Edinburgh, sometimes in London. All his former friends were dead, or had changed with changing fortunes; he alone, disillusioned, ruined, and proscribed, was faithful to all he had once loved. Only in one respect was he willing to forget the past. Following the example of Madame de Polastron's quondam lover, he took to religion in his old age, and the former patron of Chamfort and Beaumarchais caught eagerly at the duties, hopes, and consolations of Christianity to soothe his failing years.

Under the first Restoration, which brought him back to Paris after a banishment of twenty-five years, his former honours were restored to him fourfold. Created a peer of France, Governor of the Louvre, and a Member of the Institute by Royal decree, the sometime Mæcenas of Gennevilliers must have called up strange echoes, not only in his own heart, but in those of his contemporaries. "The day before yesterday," writes the Comtesse Potocka, on the 22nd of May, 1814, "I was at a concert given

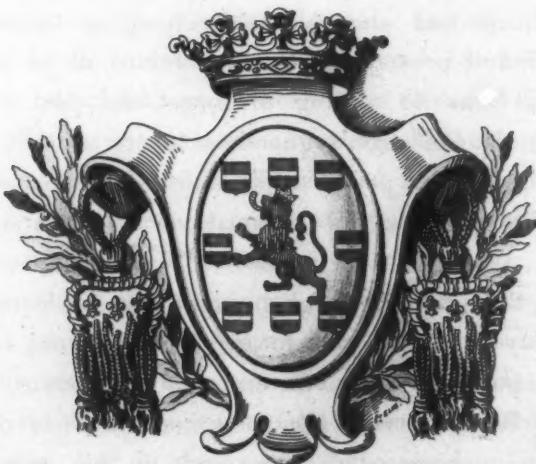
by Madame Vigée-Lebrun. Everybody was amused to see M. de Vaudreuil doing the honours exactly as he used twenty-five years ago. They seemed to have taken up their old intimacy just where it broke off, in spite of their long separation. It was like a scene in a comedy, the lovely Javotte restored to the gallant Cléon in the last act; when each might have been pardoned for not recognizing the other."

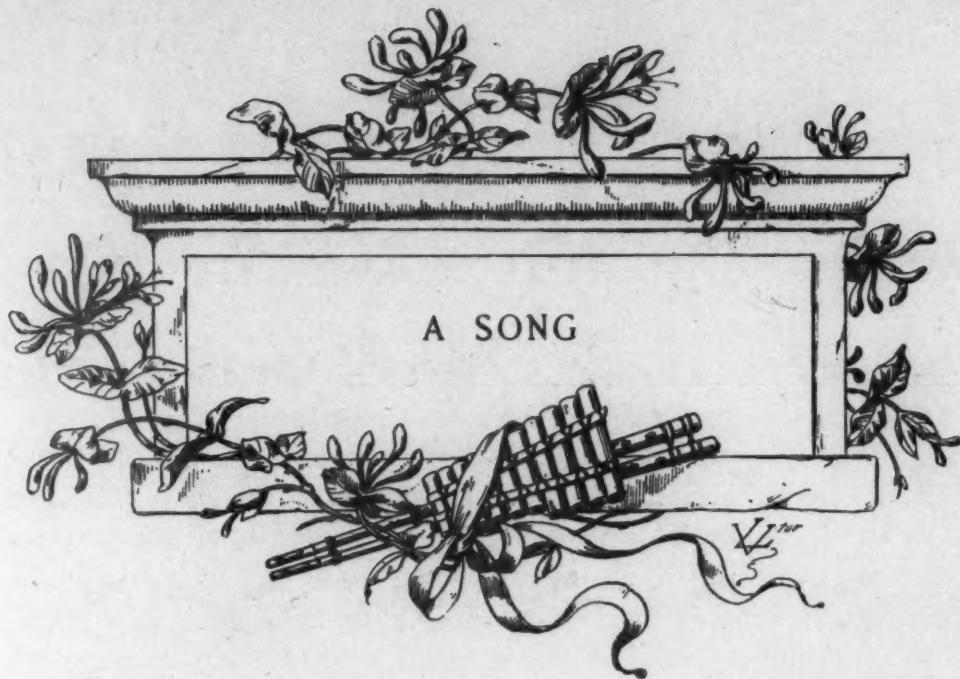
Vaudreuil died in the arms of Artois, on the 17th of January, 1817. His eulogium was spoken by the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt. It might have been summed up in one line—that which epitomizes the somewhat insipid elegy written in his honour by Brifaut :

Vaudreuil se fit aimer, ce fut là sa science.
(Vaudreuil's genius lay in his power of winning hearts.)

With him died one of the last and most brilliant representatives of old French society. In this age of liberty courtiers and privileged classes have alike disappeared, we are told. But that flatterers and parasites have not yet died out of the land, the People, our autocrat of to-day, can bear witness.

LÉONCE PINGAUD.





Music by RENÉ DE BOISDEFFRE.

Words by ARMAND SYLVESTRE.

CHANT

p Grazioso.

Animato poco

Nous nous sommes ai - més trois

PIANO

pp

Ped. * Ped. *

f

jours; Trois jours el - le me fut fi - dé - le. Trois

Ped. * Ped. *

Sheet music for Chant and Piano. The Chant part starts with a grace note followed by eighth notes. The piano part consists of eighth-note chords. The vocal line continues with "Nous nous sommes ai - més trois" and "Trois jours el - le me fut fi - dé - le." The piano part ends with a sustained note.

Cresc.

jours! — Trois jours! La constance é-ter-nel - le Et les é-ter -

Cresc.

nel - les a - mours! — Jamais! jamaïs! me di-sait -

Riten.

el - le; Moi je di-sais tou-jours! tou-jours! Tou -

Riten.

jours! — Tou-jours La constance é-ter-nel - le

f

Et les é - ter - nel - les a - mours _____

Riten. poco

Dimin.

Dimin.

Tempo

De-puis ce temps, de l'hiron - del - le Trois fois j'ai compté les re -

pp

sf

tours _____ les re - tours. _____

Cresc.

Nous nous sommes si-més trois

Cresc.

jours _____ Trois jours et - le me fut fi - dè - le

Cresc.

D. H. 12

p *Espress.* *Riten.*

A musical score for piano and voice. The top staff is for the voice, starting with a dotted half note followed by a whole note. The piano accompaniment begins with a forte dynamic. The vocal line continues with eighth-note patterns, including grace notes. The piano part features sustained notes and eighth-note chords. The vocal line concludes with a melodic line: "Trois jours el . le me fut fi . de .". The piano part ends with a forte dynamic. The vocal line resumes with a melodic line: "lo .". The piano part begins again with a forte dynamic, followed by a piano dynamic (pp) and a melodic line: "Riten.". The vocal line concludes with a melodic line: "lo .". The piano part ends with a forte dynamic.





Her bones are crumbling to dust
in the grave-yard at Brussels, her
memory lives for ever in Musset's
imperishable verse. The poet never
breathed any more redolent of a
pure love, more ardent with regret;
and it might be said that Malibran
fills the place in his life's work
which Saint Cecilia fills in that of
Raphael. No one can ever think
unmoved of these two incarnations
of divine harmony in woman, so
entirely have the two masters poured
into their work the fervour of a
soul aglow with adoration, that it
may for ever radiate on the world.

Paul de Musset, in the biography of his brother, is of opinion that,
excepting on the stage, the poet had never seen her whose death struck
from his heart this flow of exquisite verse; I am able to bring evidence to

the contrary. He may perhaps have seen her but that once, the day of her starting for England where death awaited her; but I was present as they bade each other farewell, and I will tell the tale in all simplicity. If I am compelled to appear on the scene—I, a nobody—between these two beings of a superior race, I may be forgiven in consideration of my age. I was then but a child, and a child is never an intruder. I may even be allowed to go a little further back in my memories, and give a sketch of the enchantress as I knew her before the day when I saw her with her poet, as I watched her, intent on the acting of an artist very unlike herself, but famous in his day, Délureau the pantomime actor.

I was then seven years old, and very indignant because I had been dismissed from the drawing-room at the very moment when the evening was becoming interesting—a musical evening, such as my parents had every Friday. I had played my piece, a tune of two lines, which I can see before me now at the top of a page of Clementi, and I was sent to bed and not allowed to wait to see Maria, who was expected. I was very fond of her, for she loaded me with toys and petting, and we had wild games of romps on my mother's carpet; but I had never heard her sing, and I was furious. To comfort me my nurse allowed me that evening to read in bed, and gave me a book in a blue paper cover containing the story of Geneviève de Brabant. I began it with rapture, for there is not a more charming tale, and I would, to this day, rather read it again than a psychological novel, were it not that it is too sad towards the end. When I came to the point where, by the funereal light of the unsnuffed candle, I saw the dear princess enduring the misery to which the wretch Golo has brought her, and followed her into the forest depths where the does shed tears over her little naked babe, I began to cry like the does, then to sob, and at last to cry aloud with grief, so noisily and so persistently that I was heard in the drawing-room sooner than in the kitchen, and some of the party came running out.

My father and Maria led the way. She wore a white dress with a low bodice, her hair knotted up *à la Grecque*, dazzling with youth, and overflowing with tender concern for my trouble.

"What is it?" she exclaimed, rushing up to me. "Where is the pain?"

I cried the louder and almost choked instead of answering; every one was distressed beyond measure. At last, when I could articulate I sobbed out: "It is not for myself, it is for Geneviève—poor Geneviève de Brabant!" while the book fell out of my hands on the floor. They were reassured. Maria, with a quick reaction which was natural to her, went into a fit of laughter. Then she took me up in her arms and kissed me.

To complete the cure my father promised to take me to the play. I had seen no theatrical performance but the *Ombres Chinoises*; he now proposed to put my dramatic training on a somewhat higher level. I was to be taken the very next night to the Funambules, where, instead of Punch, I should see Pierrot the clown, and the king of clowns, Débureau.

At hearing his name, to my great amazement Maria declared that she must be of the party. How could she, a quite old lady—for she must have been twenty at least—want to see an entertainment for children? I fell asleep wondering.

Next evening, with perfect punctuality, she scarcely gave us time to finish dinner before we hurried into the hackney carriage which was to take us to the Boulevard du Temple. I may mention by the way—for we are in very good time—that it was a hackney coach at that remote period when Paris as yet had no omnibuses, no footways and no gas. The vehicle was a superannuated carriage, a survival from the end of the last century, with scratched coats of arms on the doors. The inside was roomy, lined with shabby worsted velvet, but the driver grumbled if it was filled up. Older than his conveyance, more brutal than the brutes he drove, with bare feet in straw-stuffed wooden shoes, he rumbled along at a dreamy trot, and if the fare complained did not hesitate to retort in round Billingsgate. The man who was driving us would not, however, have ventured to answer my father, whose stalwart person looked prouder than ever as he escorted the woman with whom all Paris—all the world—was in love.

We were soon seated in a stage-box, and eagerly removed the screens. We came in during the interval between the first piece and the pantomime, and the slight wooden trellis was sufficient protection. The education of the public at the popular theatres has wiped out the memory of the fun of those days. It lacked refinement. At the Funambules, so long as the curtain was down, there was an incessant fire of light missiles between the "gods" and the pit. Bits of apple, orange-peel, and carrots, nay, even shoes and caps, fell like hail, and were returned with various coarse remarks. If by chance a peaceable spectator were hit in one of the boxes—there were but two—the laughter was all the louder.

This rowdy scene amused Maria hugely, while I was meditating on the title of the pantomime : "My Mother Goose's tales." I had read it on the play-bill, and was wondering how a goose could be the mother of the man who wrote the play, when the three blows sounded. Maria at once closed her lips, and after that no one in the box might speak a word; she had no idea of being inattentive. I marvel myself at the accuracy of my memory, but I pledge myself to its truth; I can see her now quite plainly; the fascinating creature bending forward to see, absorbed and mute, save when she leaned back in her chair in fits of laughter, or exclaimed now and then : "What an artist that man is! What a lesson for me!" and she clapped Débureau with all her heart.

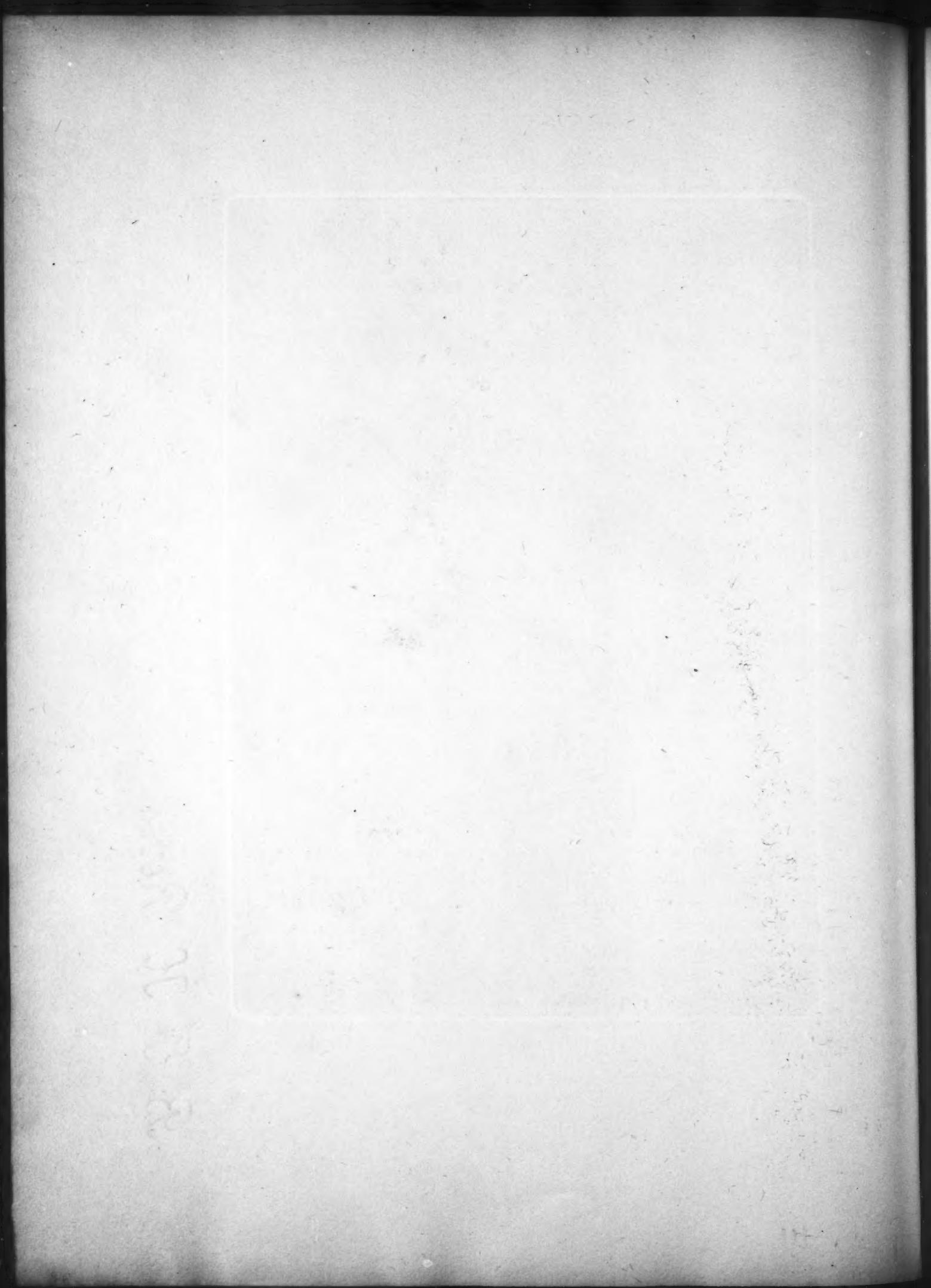
As for me, I could not understand it. How much I wished for Seraphin's speaking puppets; they indeed were alive. How could I doubt that, when Punch flung some smart quip at one or other of his audience, showing that he was in the secret of his childish weaknesses. But this crowd of dumb creatures said nothing funny. That ghostly Pierrot did not make me laugh—far from it, in fact I was utterly bored.

Maria, enchanted with her evening, owed me some compensation. She invited me to go to hear her sing at the Bouffes, and on the following Tuesday we had a box—a stage-box, as at the Funambules. The opera was *Otello*. I had never before seen a negro; I was as suspicious of the Moor as I was of the clown, and if one had discoursed by signs, the other sang in Italian, and to me was equally incompre-





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hensible. Thus I was as much bored as ever, till, towards the end of the first act, I espied Maria in the wings opposite, kissing her hand to me, as she waited for her cue. This woke me up, I watched her come forward, and stir all souls by her passion. It was the finale in which Desdemona implores her father to forgive her for marrying the Moor, and in spite of the unknown tongue in which she spoke, the omnipotent tragic actress carried me away by her acting and her voice, till suddenly Brabantio—Lablache—deaf to her prayers, thundered out his terrible curse : *'Figlia, ti maledico.*

The fatal words are accentuated by a loud sharp forte in the orchestra. Lablache's deep chest note sounded in unison, more fearful even than the brass, and I believed that he had really killed the hapless Desdemona who lay crushed at his feet. I began to shriek at the top of my voice, the whole audience turned in wrath; my father was ready to kill me, but in spite of his anger and of the sign Desdemona made to me, just raising her head, I was quite beside myself, and had to be carried away.

Five years later, one Sunday morning, as I went into my mother's room on coming from school for the day : "You are in luck," said she, "you are going to breakfast with Maria."

I had not seen her since the scene at the theatre; my mother was now a widow, and lived very quietly; Maria had been travelling a great deal. I was greatly excited. In spite of absence I knew the friend of my infancy better now.

My mother had told me many amusing anecdotes of her. For instance, at breakfast one morning she refused everything that was offered her, in a furious mood, because she was to sing in the evening and had got up hoarse. Then suddenly, seizing the mustard-pot, she hastily swallowed the contents and was the first to laugh at the heroï-comic treatment. Another time did she not take it into her head that she would play the part of Othello? She came to rehearse it at our house, with the doors shut and blinds down, but in broad daylight, her face darkened with sepia. And my mother had read me letters from her, full of warm affection and bubbling over with high spirits. Here are a few extracts :

"I had for some time kept a large place in my heart for friendship.

That place was filled upon the happy day when, by a Heaven-sent inspiration, I sought your acquaintance. At the same time I dared not tell Charles (de Bériot) all that I felt for you, lest he should think I was too easily fascinated. In fact I was completely fascinated, and Charles has this moment filled me with joy by saying that I may entirely depend on good Madame Cottinet—on a beloved sister, on the kindest of mothers. Is that too much to say? But am I not like an eldest daughter to you, though without prejudice to the sister and the friend? At any rate it is delightful to be able to tell you so frankly. And now I am comforted and shall embrace you to-morrow with a lighter heart."

Or a gayer note? Here is an impromptu invitation :

"Now the question is, whether Mother Fret and dear, fond papa will agree to a little feat. Namely; that I should call for them at two o'clock to take them for a drive, no matter where, and then go straight to the pot-house, and have a carouse, to the accompaniment of cat-gut neatly strained over a wooden machine, from which Charles will wring groans with a hank of horsehair. Say yes, and the country is saved! The *Bonnet Chinois* (1) makes a bow to its revered master and mistress, and very respectfully kisses the tip of their noses, begging to sign itself——"

Here is a scrap of contemporary history which has slipped into a wedding journey. Maria was now married to de Bériot, her first marriage having been annulled, and they had gone to Belgium, where her husband's family resided. We shall see what awaited her there.

"Namur, 1831.

"Dear friends, here we are, having arrived yesterday. A red-hot bullet dropped into the soup could not have caused greater astonishment than our advent; in fact Joseph did not recognize Charles. Our journey was most successful; the carriage was a better one than you thought it. We had the loveliest weather, and we sat on the box-seat most of the time, both of us thoroughly happy. But do you know that a revolution is going on at Brussels? At this very moment they are calling out the troops here, and we hear firing. Farewell.

"Monday, 23rd.—I re-open my letter, dear Virginie, to give you some

(1) Chinese cap. A nickname assumed in some whim of which nothing can now be known.

account of what has kept us up till three in the morning. The volunteers had begged to have quarters in the citadel, which was refused, very fortunately. They had a few cartridges, and finding the lancers in their beds, in the barracks, began hostilities—There, they are drumming to arms again!—But to proceed. The alarm was sounded at once. Two cannon were brought out from the citadel, and two charges of grape-shot were fired. The volunteers surrendered like cowards; some of them were crying! What men! I, for my part, had not a qualm of fear. The first thing I did was to seize a pair of pistols. I fancied they would come to attack Charles."

These fragments must not lead the reader to forget that we were expecting Maria to breakfast; with what impatience may be easily imagined!

She came in, kissed my mother—whom she had named "Mother Fret"—with quite filial affection and no end of loving nonsense; and then we renewed our acquaintance, she and I. Heavens! how beautiful she was! And graceful! And lively! And bewitching! A black lace veil fastened with a pearl pin framed her close bonnet, and her pale, oval face with its large, playful, childlike eyes. Those eyes were all you saw, they were supreme, and lighted everything up, as everything thrilled to our guest's rippling prattle. A swallow flying in at the window could not have more effectually filled the room with life.

The memory of that vision has effaced all trace of the breakfast which followed. I only know that afterwards my mother begged her to sing something for me, as I had never heard her—for the famous evening of the performance of *Otello* did not count, and I remember exactly what she sang, without waiting a moment to be entreated.

First a very poor ballad by Boieldieu, *Bonheur de se revoir après deux mois d'absence*. That was for my mother's benefit, a pretty allusion to their separation; then another, rather better, by Labarre : *Tu veux devenir ma compagne, Jeune Albanaise aux pieds légers*.

The air, though commonplace enough, had a touch of wildness; Maria lent it fire. I was in rapture; but what, then, were my transports when, yielding to my timid entreaty, she sang the Willow Song!

At the first notes I was carried out of myself. The walls of the room had vanished, and I saw an oriental garden. There, seated at the foot of a tree which drooped over her, a Peri was singing, while unfamiliar fragrance floated about me. Of the second and third verses none may speak after Musset. Read *Le Saule*.

She left us as she loved to leave her hearers, overcome and happy, too much excited to thank her. She was to start for England that evening and had only time to finish her arrangements.

An hour later I saw, lying on the ground in front of the hearth, the pearl pin which had fastened her veil, and I flew off to restore it to her. I found her at the Hôtel Montmorency in a room crowded with luggage. A mahogany case standing on a table remained to be packed.

Maria was not alone, a young man was standing in front of her, lingering over his leave-taking. Handsome, well proportioned, easy in every movement, his fine forehead was crowned with thick, fair curls. I know now that he was at that time but two and twenty, but he had neither the foppishness nor the insolence of youth. Though it has been said that he was a coxcomb on other occasions, nothing was to be seen now but tender respect and eager solicitude.

"Take good care of yourself," he was saying to the traveller, who to his mind was over-bold. "Do nothing imprudent! Come back safe and sound! If you could but conceive the grief it would cause if any ill should befall you!"

"What ill can befall me?" she said. And then, with a laugh, she added: "I defy illness. I have the cure here for every evil—an infallible cure," and she pointed to the mahogany box.

"Good Heavens! what is there in that case?"

"The whole faculty of medicine, my dear sir. Medicine *à la mode*; handy, compact, and, as I tell you, infallible! Homœopathy."

"What is that word?" and the young man made her repeat it. The novelty of it seemed to amuse him, and he went away at last, still laughing. We went out with him on to the landing; Maria, leaning over the bannisters, watched him as he slowly went down, holding his hat in his hand. The skylight above the dark spiral staircase lighted





up his face with a bright gleam which stamped it on my memory as he looked back after descending a few steps, and gravely said once more to that departing friend : "Take care of yourself. Do not be rash. Come back!"

When he was gone she said to me : "Do you know who that is?"

"Not in the least."

"Monsieur de Musset."

Alfred de Musset, the writer of the *Ballade à la Lune*—he was not yet known by anything else—every schoolboy had a copy of the *Ballade* in his scrap-book next to the *Djinns* by Victor Hugo; and *l'Andalouse* was in every young man's mouth!—I was delighted to have met the poet, and very proud when Maria bid me keep the pearl pin as a souvenir.

Only three months later, she had forgotten that brotherly warning. A horse she was trying to break ran away with her; she was thrown and dragged for some distance; and then, no sooner was she out of the surgeon's hands than she was so mad as to reappear on the stage. Homœopathy, it is well known, did not save her, and quite lately M. Legouvé has related in a powerful passage the pitiable scene of her death (1). The excitement at Paris was extraordinary, the grief of her friends was vehement, intense, indignant—her death was murder! My mother fell ill of it.

But there was one in whom the blow struck deeper than in others, home to that vital spot which most of us lack, that rare fibre of the heart with which nature endows none but poets, that they may suffer more than other men, and transmute their anguish by their own peculiar magic into the song which charms our sorrow, that true balm which they freely bestow on all, which perishes not in the using, and which for five thousand years has been stored up as the honey of human life.

Alfred de Musset recognized in Malibran the spiritual essence of a sister soul, all compact, as was his own, of winged impulses and that divine madness which kills the body; and when he admonished her of danger, when he implored her to beware of it, when he had that presentiment of death, he felt that he too bore in himself his own doom.

(1) Ernest Legouvé. *Soixante ans de Souvenirs*, vol. II, p. 269.

When she died the poet's cry of anguish was a dirge for both. For it is vain to say that with better care the singer and the poet would not have succumbed the one to an accident and the other to a common ailment; we see that they were of those of whom it is said that the blade wears out the sheath, and we know that sooner or later their genius would have killed Malibran and Musset. Thus he, aware of fate, bowed to the fearful end that fell on her, nay, more, he envied her; would to God it might have come no less swiftly on him!

And he sang of her in marvellous verse wherein he volatilised, and then caught and fixed for ever the ethereal elements of the dead, triumphing more surely than Orpheus over the ruthless law of nature.

Chance granted me to see on its flight from him to her the look which stamped her last image on his soul, to hear the word of farewell which was the introductory chord to that funeral symphony which none can hear without tears, and feeling that I had no right to keep this boon of the gods to myself, I have written this brief record.

EDMOND COTTINET.





JULES BRETON

PAINTER AND POET



For the last few years, Paris has been gradually recovering from one of her periodical enthusiasms. The shouts of applause and admiration, the clatter of noisy self-advertisement, the melodious chinking of gold pieces, or even of *gros sous*, all the noisy signs, in short, of an ephemeral popularity grow daily fainter. And looking back upon the men who were the objects of this fast-dying jubilation—that crowd of new painters who took Paris by storm, who colonized a whole quarter of the city, and seemed to grow rich as if by leaps and bounds—judging the movement they directed

and the fruits it has borne, the closing century may now pass her artistic sons in review, and count the masters among them.

Time has winnowed the husks from the grain. The true workers, the rightful heirs of fame, may claim their honours; and while we recognize the rank of those who have thus taken definite and permanent places in Art, it will be well to enquire by virtue of what natural gifts and of what training they have reached their goal.

An attentive study of such individualities as that of Jules Breton, the painter and poet, will be of use to us, not only in connection with by-gone developments, but in their bearing upon the present and the future.

Thirty years ago Théophile Gautier declared Breton "truly worthy to be called by that much-abused name of artist." I am afraid, could the great Théo come among us once more, he would find the present generation no whit more discreet in its application of the sacred term than his own. But he would freely confirm the judgment pronounced at the very outset of a career that has proved both long and prolific.

The painter's earliest essays, some realistic studies that proclaimed him a student of modern life, breathed the true spirit of art. They shewed him to be already equipped with wide knowledge, with strenuous industry, with keen perception. He attracted, interested, compelled respectful consideration. The hand, skilled servant of the eye, interpreted with marvellous aptitude his sympathetic and original outlook upon an almost virgin world, left fallow by the later schools, whose disciples had forgotten truth in their search for poetry. But Breton's world was that of rustic life and toil, of wide serene landscapes, of tranquil aims and activities, of eternal human interests set in the calm background of nature, of scenes that shew the immutable analogies of animate and inanimate creation.

And yet, strange as it may seem, these early canvases, and even the famous examples in our national museum, shew the influence of a school then moribund, now wholly dead. It would perhaps be going too far to connect the name of Léopold Robert even with Breton's first pictures. But whence, if not from that once famous painter, did he get certain falsely transparent lights, certain smooth china-like tones, contrasting disagreeably with the vigorous workmanship and masterly completeness of his work as a whole. These early essays shew yet another pitfall ready for the feet of their author. The over-elaboration of expression in some of

the groups seems to threaten an invasion of the fatal anecdotic spirit in soil prepared for a harvest of good and healthy fruit.

Yet these very faults, this fleeting fancy for art conventions, were perhaps of service to the young painter, and saved him from greater dangers. Fighting in the ranks shoulder to shoulder with such men as J.-F. Millet and Gustave Courbet, his momentary imitation of a master whose principles were almost ludicrously at variance with those he himself professed may be noted with a smile.

What might reasonably have been dreaded, on the other hand, was that he should become the involuntary parodist of a style dangerous in the extreme to the imitator, that style which the master of Ornans has carried to its utmost limits on his rustic canvases.

Jules Breton, happily for himself and for us, was a classicist by instinct and by education. By this we mean that he had complete mastery of his methods, that he chose his ideal deliberately and with judgment, that he was absolute in his convictions, and scrupulous in his means of expressing them. He preserved his originality, and triumphed by his own innate gifts. The time soon came when he no longer imitated, when he saw the path and walked in it. It was long and led to unexpected heights. Yet he found few obstacles in his way.

The moment was favourable for sincerity in Art, and for that development which turns for its images to the fount of Nature, and to the simple aspects of human life.

Romanticism was dying out in a blaze, like the setting sun, amidst the lurid epopees, the gorgeous colour-tragedies of Eugène Delacroix. And the taste for rustic scenes painted with freshness and sentiment, bid fair to vie with the eighteenth century rage for court shepherds and shepherdesses and drawing-room peasants. In literature, the same reaction was making itself felt, and George Sand was enthraling the reading world with her *Mare au Diable*, *Petite Fadette*, *François le Champi* and other idyls of the fields. The moment of Breton's *début* coincided with the gloomiest stage in Millet's sorrowful career. His works were neglected, his drawings sold for a few shillings. Breton, on the other hand, found a ready acceptance. His was not the fierce originality that alarms and

repels. The crudity of his utterances was not incompatible with a certain grace; his art presented results without too harsh a revelation of their processes. His peasants at least spoke French; Millet's mumbled patois, or were dumb. There was little to attract the slow sympathy of amateurs in those sullen sons of the "black animals" painted by La Bruyère. But Breton's art, frank, transparent, a little over-facile yet charming by virtue of that very defect, conquered fame almost without effort. The road lay straight before him, and the artist had only to advance. The happiest conditions, the bit of luck without which none can succeed, great gifts, cultivated with a perseverance without which no triumph can be won, all these have been his, and combine before our eyes to build up the *œuvre* of the master. And his art seems to have grown into intimate union with the rural nature it depicts, and to have caught the same aroma of healthful vigour, drawing from the nourishing earth the simple rhythms and majestic cadences of the changing seasons, from the wide sky its light, from the peasant soul its tranquil faith in the virtue of honest toil.

Breton is strong because he is simple. Dowered with rich artistic gifts, he had the wisdom to seek inspiration among the images that had filled his childish mind in early years, to let his talent grow and fructify upon the soil where his poetic vision received its first awakenings, its keenest impressions. His family had lived and multiplied, from the remotest period to which it refers in its modest genealogy, in a tiny Artois village, so insignificant that the railway company has not deemed it worthy of a *correspondance*. It is connected with the station at Carvin, on the Lens and Lille railway, by means only of a country *diligence*. Courrières, the cradle of the Breton family, is a little excrescence on the melancholy plains of a province gray with the mists of marshy meadows, and the reek of factory chimneys. To a stranger, the country seems rather naked and gloomy than austere and majestic. And yet it was the source of all Jules Breton's poetic inspiration. The less picturesque the country, the poorer in superficial beauties, in the harmonies of line and light, the more intensely was this son of the soil penetrated by the quiet loveliness of rustic corners, the more fervidly did he throw the passion

of his own soul into placid landscapes, and glorify monotonous horizons with the varied splendours of his own dreams. The somewhat exaggerated individuality of Breton's style is no doubt due in great measure to the poverty of his favourite scenes. His artistic gifts triumph over his unpromising materials, but we feel that in expressing his personality, his models lose something of their own. All the conditions of Breton's early life combined to form his character on virile, dominant, and original lines. His childhood was overcast by the twofold shadow of domestic bereavement and narrow means. Not indeed, that he ever felt the pressure of extreme poverty. The generosity of a relative saved him from that ordeal of sordid care that dispels illusions, vulgarizes aspirations, and prostitutes genius to the dealer and the public, its two natural enemies. He was enabled to enter Drolling's *atelier*, where he was a fellow-student with Henner, and where, if there was little of inspiration to be gathered from his master's precise and mediocre art, he at least gained a solid mastery of technical methods. The necessary training was barely at an end when he began to taste the sweets of success. In 1853, after two or three preliminary essays that attracted little notice, his "Return of the Reapers" appeared at the Salon, and connoisseurs pointed out that a new painter of rustic life had arisen.

Jules Breton's vocation was then determined. He has never swerved in his fidelity to the inspirations which he felt to be an inexhaustible source of work and progress. Finding in his native fields endless themes for brush and pen, he has wisely contented himself with a demesne on which his genius flourishes as a plant in congenial soil. In one of his best poems, he has well described the charms of such a peaceful career as his own, the healthy joys of existence in some calm haven, far from strife and struggle, and beautified by devotion to the familiar task that soothes life's fever with its beneficent routine. He lives at Courrières, and to him there is no landscape so full of charm and variety as that of his native village, its steeple looming through the mists, its fields of bending grain, its silent fog-wreathed marshes, its river and its washing-place, and its women beating the wet linen in the stream.

"I can imagine nothing more beautiful."

So he sings. Others go out in search of marvels. In their feverish vigils

"Ils ne sentiraient pas ta tranquille beauté,
Tu suffis à mon cœur, toi qui vis nos grands-pères
Lorsqu'ils passaient joyeux, en leurs heures prospères
Sur ces mêmes chemins, aux mêmes soirs d'été."

(They will forget thy tranquil beauties. But to my heart thou sufficest, thou, who beheldst our fathers in their happy evening hours, passing gaily along these same pathways, in this same summer weather.)

To spend one's life in one's native place perhaps shews true wisdom. It was the fashion of a healthier age than ours. The artist has never regretted his obedience to the voices that called to him from the familiar fields among which his forefathers slept, urging him to stay among them, and learn the secret of their hidden charm. His nature fitted him for a life of honest work, and of few events beyond the joys and sorrows of a mind infinitely tender and sensitive, as is shewn by a journal of his childish days.

We are told that he had a great distaste for the classical learning instilled into him at the Douai *Lycée*. Even for a son of Artois, it would have been hard to find a more cheerless barrack, or a more stagnant city than that in which he was condemned to go through the scholastic mill. Far indeed removed from this prison of dirty bricks was the enchanted garden of the little peasant's dreams, that Eden we can all remember. There, the orphan must have wept some of those bitter childish tears that have poisoned or tarnished a whole life-time. I picture him one of those listless scholars, and I think, when he read Sully-Prudhomme's gentle strophes, he must have recognized himself and have repeated the melancholy lines,

"O mères, coupables absentes,
Qu'aujourd'hui vous leur semblez loin!"

(O mothers, cruel absent ones, how far off you seem to them to-day !)

Breton knew that his mother had gone on a journey from which there was no return.

And yet in spite of his misery, we cannot believe him to have been insensible to the verse of Virgil, the dimly-felt beauties of Homer. For

in this unwilling scholar there lay dormant the spirit of classic beauty that claims kindred with the ancients. The poet, who later on was to show unmistakably the influence of the Parnassian school must have already been dreaming, at the age when the imagination begins to germinate, and as yet is innocent of formula, of maidens running among the golden corn as in the *Aeneid*, or bleaching linen by the shore like the royal Nausicaa whom Ulysses found to guide him by the purple sea.

His years of apprenticeship over, Breton found his way back to his early home. His domestic destinies were determined by his marriage with the daughter of his old friend and master, Félix Desvignes, in whose companionship he has found that quiet happiness so helpful to artistic development. In one of his best known canvases, now in the Luxembourg, he has shewn us, as it were, an embodiment of his ideal, together with the image of his Muse. When we have added to this picture one of his refined and faithful portraits, some study from Brittany, and one of his later idyls, such as "Dawn" or "The Song of the Lark," we shall have prepared a series for the walls of the Louvre in which future generations may read a summary of our painter's *œuvre*. I should like to see above the pictures, the verses in which their author has written his own commentary.

To fully appreciate Breton's art one must know the country he has chosen for the groundwork of nearly all his pictures. He has never wearied of painting its familiar aspects, both with pen and pencil. Artois is the territory he has made his own, a territory more Flemish than French, with its calm horizons, its vast perspective of cultivated lands, its shrouded skies, and its pale diffused lights, its touch of keenness in the air, telling of the neighbouring sea. It is this home of reverie and rustic toil that he invokes :

"C'est l'Artois, doux pays....
L'Artois aux gais talus où les chardons foisonnent,
..... Le vieil Artois aux plaines infinies...."

(— Artois, dear country—
Artois, with its green slopes where the thistles spring
— Old Artois, with its infinite plains—)

And so in every written or painted page he proclaims the poetry that

lurks among its brown furrows, and shews some fresh aspect of its rural charm.

To most people this country which the painter sees through such an enchanted haze would seem to demand a greater austerity in its laureate. But Jules Breton has in him a Gallic strain of mingled dreaminess and optimism which makes all things appeal to him from their brightest side. Beautified by his touching and filial worship, the desert blossoms like the rose. The melancholy landscape, so akin to those wide expanses over which Ruysdael's mournful genius brooded, sparkles with magic light, and radiant as in the sunniest canvases of the gayer Dutch masters, seems to smile for and with man.

For man—or rather woman, always the central figure in Jules Breton's idyls—is never with him a mere product of the soil, as might seem natural, and perhaps even artistically imperative in some cases. After invoking the vast plains of Artois, the poet hastens to introduce his heroine, the figure which is to animate his solitudes, "the little gleaner with her brow of light."

And the painter has shewn her to us, strong and lithe, in hieratic pose, the sheaf upon her shoulder, looking, with her powerful features, her vigorous frame, her amber eyes, and sunburnt skin, steeped, like some rural priestess, in mystic rites, proud, savage, and triumphant.

I confess that I am charmed by this apotheosis of rusticity, and that I was specially enthralled by the painter's most characteristic presentment of his Gallic Ceres, that of 1871.

This "Gleaner" marks a transition stage in the painter's *œuvre*. From about this period we may date a fresh phase in his art, which, though still faithful to its choice of subject, developed a larger manner, and certain new departures both in colour and handling. It forms the one epoch in a singularly even and satisfactory process of evolution, just as his studies in Brittany represent his sole experiment with other models than those of his early choice.

In his first works, and indeed for a considerable period, his colour had a certain crudity. His tones were opposed rather than blended. Each asserted its own value, proclaimed its presence somewhat too noisily,







imitating in this respect the figures in the picture, each of which seemed eager to concentrate all interest. A harsh critic might have complained that there were too many scenes compounded of three principal figures, and of three principal colours, blue, red, and brown, skilfully contrasted, but indifferently harmonized.

In the works of his second period, the blemishes I have hinted at disappear. The air seems to play more freely round his figures, blending all their details in a natural harmony. To complain of the equal importance of various groups on one canvas would be to ignore the painter's right to a theory of his own, a theory which he is prepared to maintain sturdily against all comers, and which, indeed, is part and parcel of his genius. But the composition, broader and more rhythmical, is arranged with more dignity, shews more intention and more elevation. Sometimes a solitary female figure by a fountain, or some child listening with upturned face to the warbling of a skylark, gives us a glimpse of that spirit of poetry which Jules Breton sees clinging to the skirts of rural nature, because he himself has conjured it up.

His style, in fact, like that of all true artists, is himself, translated by means of paint. The rhythmic harmonies of his scenes, the character of his figures, are inspirations of his own instincts enwrapping the models he has placed before him. His works are idyls, in the ancient sense, but also, in more modern parlance, they are epopees.

In spite of usage, I doubt whether one ought to call by the conventional name of epopee a naïve, complex, and moving work like the *Odyssey*, or even the *Iliad*; unless, indeed, the right definition of an epopee be, a narrative in which there is much fighting, and in which the heroes are kings. To find the true classic epopee, we must come down to more advanced periods of culture. Then we meet at once with *Aeneids*, the poems in which primitive man, the chief of ancient times, shepherd of peoples or of flocks, plays his part, illumined by the artificial reflections of a learned civilization. In such retrospective works, the love of truth, the desire to depict primeval nature, is heavily weighted by the impress of the times in which the poet himself lives, and we find the prehistoric warrior speaking not his own tongue, but that of his Creator. When the

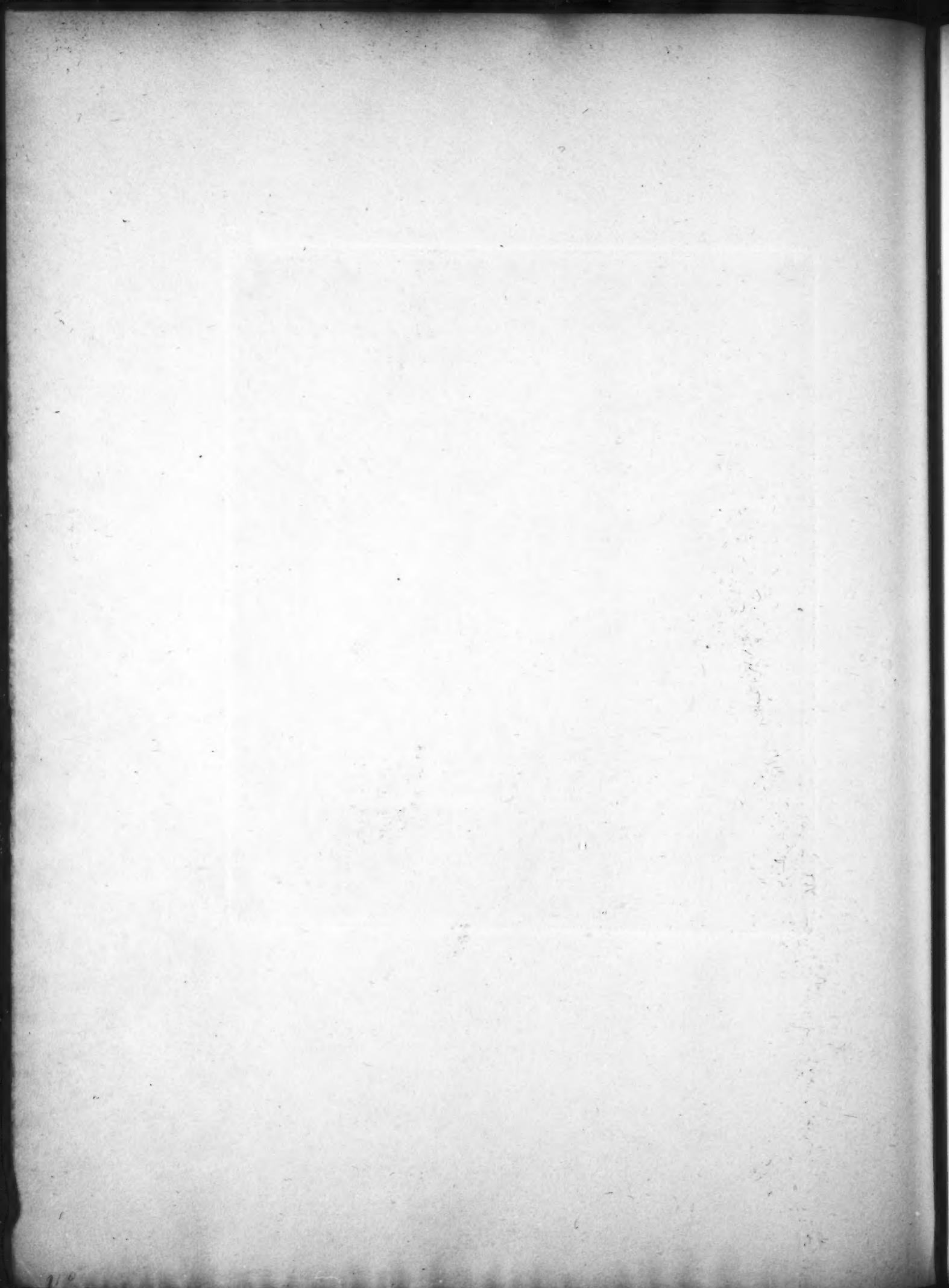
artist is great and powerful, and loves his art, he will create types after the images of his own dreams, beautiful and noble, but frequently unreal. All his sincerity and all his love of nature will not prevent him from fashioning them unconsciously, involuntarily, in accordance with the ideal of beauty which his education, the age he lives in, or the men he makes his judges suggest or insist upon. It is in this sense and this degree that Jules Breton is an epic poet.

He has little knowledge of those depths which Millet's bitter peasant soul could sound; to him they are alien as the rustics who passed along singing in chorus were to the musician of the "Seasons." Neither is he—for a definition of anything so subtle and fugitive as art is best given in negatives—neither is he, like the latest painters of peasant life, simply a seeker after atmospheric effects. It is true that, especially in his later works, his treatment of light is admirable. But all such details are with him accessories. Man is the point round which all rustic nature revolves. For man suns rise and set, and landscapes are flooded with light; the evening vapours rise to emphasize the drooping melancholy of weary workers; the freshness of early morning serves as a setting for the first dream of a young girl, passing through the meadows at dawn; and the noonday blaze glints on the white robes of young communicants, winding through flowery streets.

We have seen that women, dexterously grouped, or passing lonely and majestic across some harmonious landscape, play an important part in Breton's *œuvre*. But are these women really peasants of the soil? Long as I have lived in country regions all over France, I have never met with any of this completely heathen mould. The French type is an elastic one, admitting of infinite variety both in charm and structure. But it seems to me that the painter's genius has fashioned a type of his own, by a process of taking some wrinkled face, and overlaying it with the poetry of his own vision, of his own profound belief in the beauty of humanity, the harmonies of all created things. This is essentially a heathen conception. I could wish that Breton had been able to detach himself more entirely from that dangerous school which nurses the dying fires of romanticism, and which, for the last twenty years, has made poetry







inaccessible or trivial, falsifying art by the formula of a poet who can never be successfully imitated, defacing the modern poem with pedantic vulgarities, making rhyme a plaything, and the idea an accessory. Breton's natural sincerity both as painter and writer has preserved his originality, though he has not altogether escaped the influences of the sect.

Now and again, he has risen into perfect communion with purely antique sentiment, with the great heart of nature. Note the woman filling her jar at a fountain, or that other, who lies gazing out over a wide troubled sea. Or listen to the invocation that closes the thirteenth canto of his poem *Jeanne*:

"O filles, qui traitez encore vos genoux lents...
Filles, prosternez-vous ! Adorez le soleil!"

(O women, still dragging your slow limbs along—
Prostrate yourselves—adore the sun !)

It is curious to find a mind of this order strongly attracted by the aspects of a country pre-eminently Celtic in character, rude almost to barbarity in its manners, the exact antithesis of the smooth Latin ideal; a country which, when the painter of the "Gleaner" first visited it, still clung passionately to ancient traditions, and whose children form a race alien in thought, in habits, and in costume from the models to which he had all his life devoted himself.

Whether this attraction be born of contrast, or of some secret expansion of unexplored sympathies, matters little. Breton felt the charm of Brittany; he returned to study it more closely, and made numberless sketches and some important pictures of this, to him, unknown country.

The impressions he received from the breaking of entirely fresh ground are interesting to follow. The strongly marked features of Brittany seem to have struck him chiefly in two of its aspects, the type of the inhabitants, and the vivid picturesqueness of their costume. The interest roused by these points is apparent in his poetry, which abounds in descriptive touches allied to them, and in his painting, which dwells on them with loving minuteness.

The women of Pont-Croix, of Douarnenez, of Pont-l'Abbé, of Loc Ronan, evoke echoes of Holbein in his mind. In his artist vision he sees these

peasants and fish-wives figuring in the brilliant miniature of ancient missals, or on some Michelangelesque fresco. Or better still, he loves to set them against one of those sober backgrounds affected by the master of Basle.



Archaic garments clothe these somewhat rigid forms, bodices of braided cloth, petticoats of gay colours. The simple faces are framed and crowned with almost hieratic splendour in marvellous headgears of fantastic shape, towers, horns, mitres, frills, lace, network, and filagree. The artist's eye feasted on all these relics of a bygone age, the gala finery of the women, the short jackets of the men, embroidered in the middle of the back with a radiant *saint sacrement*. Alas! these ancient costumes are dying out! Studded girdles, coifs, and necklaces, are disappearing; *brago-braz* grow scantier and longer, and the locks of the sons of Saint Yves and Saint Corentin are shorn. The Brittany which Jules Breton has painted for us, the Brittany which he has sung after the fashion of Theuriet and of Sully-Prudhomme, begins to bristle with casinos, and to swarm with the English colonists who have deserted Touraine.

At Pont-l'Abbé, we shall have some difficulty in finding a dealer in genuine Breton vests. He now makes them chiefly for travellers. Brittany

has become the favourite recruiting ground for the army of "village girls who find their way to Paris." Happy was the chance which led the author of *Les Champs et la Mer* to the Armoric coast in time. The picturesque life that delighted him on every side now lurks only in a few old-world corners.

If I have succeeded in giving a precise idea of Breton's genius, it will be readily understood that something eluded his grasp in this strange country, that indefinable aroma, harsh, acrid, pungent, that clings round the land and its people. To understand what I mean, look at some canvas of Vollon's, on which he has depicted the rough womanhood of the coast; call up the image of the "Polletaise" as he has painted her; compare her with Breton's melancholy Druidess, and you will see through what a personal medium the Artesian painter beheld the daughters of Armorica. We need not ask which of the two realizations is the true one. Both must be true, since both bear the stamp of a profound sincerity.

Even after reading his poem, *Le Pardon*, I doubt whether Jules Breton ever fully entered into the somewhat savage mysticism of the country. His description of the Breton *fête* is an exquisitely harmonious passage, as full of bustle, movement, and colour as a pictured *kermesse*. But the artist seems to have missed something of the intense fervour, the almost sinister faith that flourishes in this land of waves and boulders, among a people who have grown hardy on a granite soil, whose lives are spent on the wide expanses of desolate *landes*, or tossing on the tumultuous plains of greedy, murderous waves. The faces he has chosen for models among the Breton women are none of those blunt, snub-featured countenances with sea-green eyes, so common in the province, faces of so little superficial charm that at a first glance they almost repel; yet under the stress of sudden passion those commonplace features have an attraction strong as the magic spells of legendary Vivien, those mysterious eyes deepen as with the darkness of a storm reflected in wild waters. The name of Vivien calls up before me a sublime and cruel work of the English pre-Raphaelite, Edward Burne Jones. He has painted the enchantress coiled at the feet of her hoary lover, every line of her body suggesting her dryad grace, the serpentine suppleness of a form lithe,

slender, yet full of a murderous alertness. She too, that strange fairy with the steel-blue eyes, is a child of Brittany, a daughter of its sombre forests, its limpid waters.

But Breton, in his rendering of peasants and fisher-women, shews no trace of any such weird symbolism as that of the English painter. His art, delighting in frank healthy forms, in clear horizons, rejects alike mysticism on the one hand, and exaggerated realism on the other. He is content to have attained to harmony in his *œuvre*, to have so enriched his memory as to give to his works those elements of life which ensure their imperishable interest, without jarring the melody of his conceptions.

The mind of this modern painter, in short, is cast in the antique mould. He is a worshipper at Hellenic shrines. He speaks to us with profound emotion of those vanished ages, which he has well called

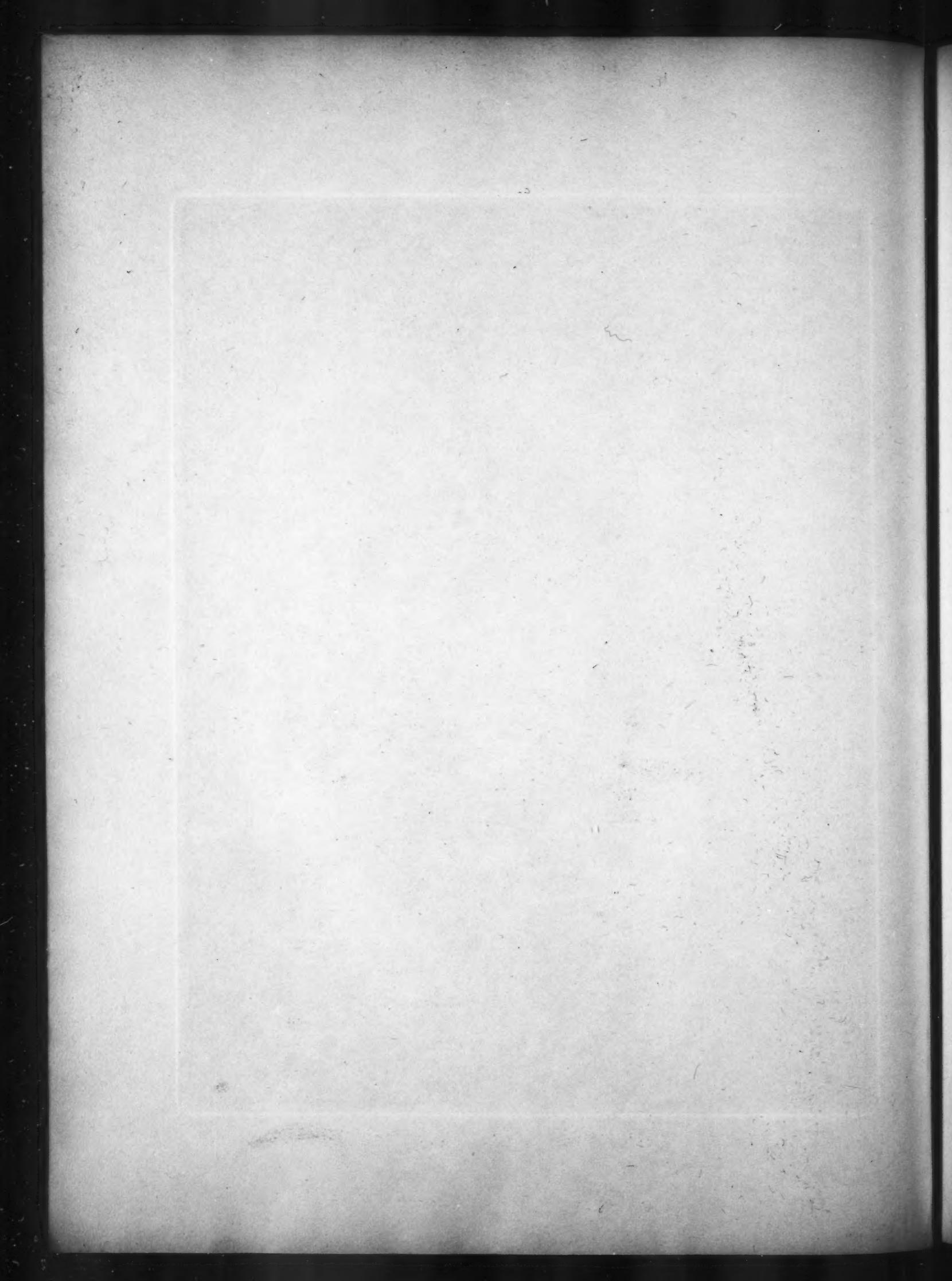
“..... le temps de la beauté
Errant dans le soleil et dans la liberté.”

(The age of beauty, wandering through sunshine and liberty.)

Invigorated by study, illumined by an æsthetic ideal of extreme purity, he has drunk of Grecian springs, and these, the pure, the immortal, the unfailing, have informed him with the spirit of beauty, with a noble conception of life, with gifts of love and harmony which blend the elements of nature and the dreams of poetry, and produce a whole to which the miracle of art has granted eternal life.

We cannot take leave of Breton without glancing at him in another aspect. He is a poet of high rank, and his verse forms the best commentary on his pictures. We understand them more fully after studying his written revelation of himself, for the same spirit animates both. Poetry is far from being merely a relaxation to Breton, a pastime of little real importance. The personal character of his art, already very strongly marked in his pictures, still more so in his drawings, reaches its highest point in his verse. The rhymes are happy, the rhythm pure and flowing, the language refined and musical; now and then we catch the poet, but more often we detect the influence of the school which was dominant when he first began to write, in all its vicious artificiality. Exquisite passages abound, especially in *Les Champs et la Mer*, one of those poetic





records of daily experiences, in which impression follows on impression, like sketches in an album, or a bundle of brilliant water-colours dashed off by a master in his walks, his journeys, his moments of reverie.

These verses shew us the poet still haunted by the chaste memories and serene visions of his childhood. In the poem which deals most minutely with the rural impressions and memories of his early years, we recognize the same reverent worshipper of womanhood who painted that divine feminine figure on the sea-shore at evening. Jules Breton's women are always lovable, noble, and almost saintly in their grace; the whole sex is sanctified to him by the memory of his long-lost mother. That tender image, the good angel who has hovered over the cradle of nearly every man of genius, has never faded from his imagination, but he sees its soft reflection and feels its gentle influence in all he has achieved.

Living thus in touch with the purest of human affections, his ideal must necessarily be a noble one. Under what form has he conceived his Muse, the embodiment of his poetic dream, the figure that on Coreggio's canvases took the name of Antiope, on Palma's that of Violante, on Prud'hon's that of Psyche? He has christened his, "The Gleaner," and this is how he sings her :

" Le sol fume, et c'est l'heure où s'en revient, superbe,
 La glaneuse, le front couronné de sa gerbe,
 Et de cheveux plus noirs que l'aile du corbeau.
 C'est une enfant des champs, *d'après, sauvage et fière*
 C'est elle, sur son sein tombent des plis de toile
 Entre les blonds épis rayonne son œil noir.
 Aux franges de la nuit ainsi brille une étoile.
 Phidias eût rêvé le chef-d'œuvre que voile
 Cette jupe taillée à grands coups d'ébauchoir."

This preoccupation with Phidias and the sculpturesque is another essential quality in Breton's æsthetic scheme. Biblical or Virgilian, all his heroines have the same statuesque outline.

They are as he describes them, proud (*fières*). But neither in poem nor on canvas do they appear to us austere or savage (*d'après, sauvages*). The admirable harmony of their grouping, the skilful marshalling of their stately progress strike us at once. But the austerity, the fierce intensity of their native soil has neither part nor lot in them.

Breton's two *métiers* have naturally re-acted on each other. In his pictures we see how the poet's mind has guided the painter's hand; in his poems we recognize the painter's perceptive subtlety, his sympathy with form and colour. He seizes all the details of the world around him, marks the minute developments and metamorphoses of living things. He is himself a rustic born and bred, and his patient observation of nature is no new study taken up after a life-time spent in cities, its mystères complicated by novelty. But he is further an artist; and the infinite detail which escapes the dull vision of the peasant altogether, gives daily food for wonder and delight to a mind ever fresh, perceptive, and responsive.

This reverent student of rustic life has observed it in all its aspects, in detail, and as a whole. In his poet's memory lie garnered a whole store of childish impressions, of those simple phenomena so momentous to the round-eyed gaze of a baby soul, the finding of a coppice nest, the dazzle of the setting sun reflected in some still pool, the whirr of an insect through the air, the swift dart of a shrew-mouse, the distant music of church bells, the passing of a gleaner with her sheaf upon her shoulder.

And everywhere in his work we see the traces of his dual gift, the painter in the poet, the poet in the painter. He has noted, for instance, with a poet's ear, that death bells ring in the minor; and when he paints some village funeral, he subdues his colour harmonies, and gives us soft veiled half-tones, a plaintive symphony in a minor key.

On the other hand we sometimes find the painter dictating to the poet verses recalling one of those vellum books in which the ancient masters traced notes and sketches on the same page. Thus, if he wanders in his garden towards evening, in the gathering twilight, his painter's eye is struck by the fact that in the suffused light the red flowers become black, while the blue still shew light.

"La fleur rouge était noire, et la bleue encore claire."

(*L'Eden.*)

It is easy to see that a perfect equilibrium of the two will be hard to keep. The poet, indeed, often seduces the painter into an over-regard for subject, an exaggerated picturesqueness of style; more often still, it is the poet's landmarks that are removed, and we get verses that seem to be

written in paint, technical, complicated, a verbal presentment of the author's palette :

"Et la couleur se calme, exquise,
Dans la puissance des tons bruns."
(*Crépuscule.*)

(And colour dies deliciously into the brown of gloom.)

The following curious strophes read like memoranda of "values."

"Par le charme surpris
Doucement l'œil repose
Sur le jaune et le rose
Sur le sol gris-souris."
(*La Glaneuse.*)

(Held by the charm, the eye rests softly on yellow, on pink, on the mouse-brown earth.)

The next sounds like a scrap of studio jargon cadenced : "In the vast whiteness dashed with blood red." It is a painter too who describes the "red stuffs on white, giving an effect of dawn.—Trees harshly obtruding their vivid green."

It is strange to find this extreme, almost morbid acuteness of colour-sense in a writer whose pictures are peculiarly sober in tone, and whose lavish use of brown tints makes one sometimes tremble for the future of his canvases.

The painter, fortunately, has suffered less from exotic influences, and of the two artists who meet in Jules Breton, the freer and more complete is naturally the greater.

Like nearly all our poets, Breton's imagination was long possessed with the idea of writing a great modern poem. The outcome of this ambition is his latest and most mature work, *Jeanne*, an idyl in twenty-four cantos, on which he was occupied for four years.

Jeanne, though much below *Mireille*, deserves to rank with Theuriet's *Sylvine*, and Aicard's *Miette et Nore*. Everything that art can borrow from



intellectual gifts, the masculine vigour of the verse, the supple ease of the rhythm, the richness of the rhyme, the careful composition, the ring of unfailing truth seems there to ensure for it more than a passing fame. The weak point in *Jeanne* is the figure of the heroine, and I cannot but regret that the painter of the "Gleaner" should have here sought to astonish us by a peculiarly plastic type. It is difficult to imagine why the poet has introduced an Indian strain in his peasant-girl's pedigree. What strange classical caprice induced him to burden the natural *dénouement* of his pastoral with the puerile incidents of the mysterious foreign birth, the rich family, the apparition of the real mother, and all the like conventional apparatus? All that is truly fine in *Jeanne* springs from the same root as the great works of her creator and is essentially of home growth, the product of our national rustic sentiments and activities at their best. The rest might be left to the oblivion it deserves, were it not that the poet has intermixed his woof of flimsy cotton with many threads of the pure flax.

Throughout his written works, Breton is faithful to the pure and lofty ideal that has inspired his brush in so many painted pastorals. His French peasant is slightly glorified, perhaps; he has a dignity often lacking in the original. Yet even so, the portrait is a truer likeness than the monstrous caricature of a notorious modern writer. Painted pictures have this advantage over written ones, that they do not readily lend themselves to the same debasements. Their art, more limited and more concise, is so directly subject to public censure, that obscenity and imbecility cannot escape the pillory, and painting has thus been saved from the defilement which in the name of realism, has of late years overspread literature.

In Breton's *œuvre*, that impalpable quality we call "style" is one of the most marked features. And here we are again reminded that the painter is also a poet.

Admirers of the painter might well have feared the very abundance of his gifts, dreading lest the riches of his conceptions should embarrass his execution. But happily, Breton is not less a craftsman than a poet. As a painter, he has neither declaimed nor preached. We have seen that he sometimes allows his literary sense to interpose in such details as the arrangement and emphasis of a picture, or the introduction of some anec-

dotic passage. But the truth and dignity of his manner, the science of his method, the harmony of his realizations have saved him from pedantry and pomposity on the one hand, from trivial sentiment on the other.

If George Sand's peasants survive in literature when the half-century they charmed and beguiled has passed away, Breton's will surely deserve a similar rank in painting. His rustics lack something of the genial candour, the pastoral calm that flowed so readily from the pen of the *châtelaine* of Nohant. But if less fascinating they are more vigorous. Their beauty is of a more picturesque order, their silhouettes have a cast more Roman, if not more Virgilian. And, in all essentials, the artists who created them are of one mind. In the works of each we see the same intention, the same methods, the same following after things beautiful and noble. The Berrichonne Fadette and the Artesian Gleaner are twin-sisters. It may be that this hybrid conception is not altogether free from convention and personal colouring. Only to the greatest minds has it been given to distinguish absolutely between truth and dreams. And failing this revelation, we cannot think that slight differences of degree in the precision of poem or picture are of much moment. Is not all our gratitude due to the artist who has the courage to interpret his visions for us, and the gift of so placing them before our eyes that he compels our sympathy and comprehension?

I know that the most French of all the German pessimists has declared "objectivity to be above all things necessary in painting," which translated out of the tongue of Schopenhauer and applied to the present case would seem to say that Jules Breton should have cast aside his tendency to reverie, and abandoned himself completely to nature in its simplicity. Yet can we ask more of an artist than that he should be the worthy interpreter of nature, and that, however inflexible his personality, he should subordinate it to a sincere and lofty ideal?

In one of his poems he has introduced the pretty story of Théodore Rousseau, and the woodcutter who watched him painting an oak and asked : "Why do you take so much trouble to make that tree when it is made already?" If the master of Courrières had been so catechised by one of his models, he might have answered that out of what nature had already

created, he was creating afresh. The sturdy peasants, the noble Gallic maidens who figure on his canvases, are idealized types of our race, as he beholds them in the past with the eyes of enthusiasm, in the present by the light of faith, in the future by his belief in progress and in beauty. They fade, these figures he has seen growing up around and tilling the fertile corn lands of Artois. The steeple of Courrières crumbles and decays. But the creatures of his brush and pen remain and will endure, as Rousseau's oak survived the blasting of the forest. Future generations shall see in his epic works the monument of that sincere and fervent art which he loved and followed, finding in his labours both present reward and the earnest of triumphs yet to come. It is not necessary that every artist should take for his device that austere maxim of François de Pange : "Sad, like the truth."

PIERRE GAUTHIEZ.





To Mademoiselle Claire Delmas, Rue du Bac, Paris.

Beechgrove Manor, Leicestershire,
March 1st, 18...

Are you still in the land of the living? Should I find you in Paris?
Do you remember me? Would you like to see a ghost? Answer, answer,
and by return of post!

ODETTE.

To Mrs. James Nevil, Beechgrove Manor, Leicestershire (England).

Paris, March 5th.

Claire Delmas no longer exists! Did you never receive the letter she sent you, nearly seven years ago, with the news of her marriage? Yes, you will find her still in Paris, but not in the Rue du Bac. We are very comfortably settled in a new street, the Avenue Marceau. You ask if I remember you? Ah! You do indeed deserve to be forgotten after so many unanswered letters, after such an interminable silence! Do you remember your last communication? "I am bored to death, and until I can tell you a different tale, I shall write no more." I showed it to my husband, he was highly amused! He has no great love for the English,

and Mrs. James Nevil's impressions of domestic life in England gave him a most favourable opinion of that little lady! It is well she should have an advocate, for at present, my attitude towards her is of the sternest! And until she has fully explained her unkind neglect of her old friend I shall be absolutely implacable. But you threaten me with a ghostly visitation! If the ghost is to be my Odette, how joyfully will I welcome it! The mere sight of your delicate little handwriting, so characteristic, and so un-English, made me feel years younger! It seemed only yesterday that we were just sixteen, that we were bidding good-bye to the *Sacré-Cœur* and to each other, on the eve of leaving for our respective homes, and exchanging two horrible little rings of twisted gold and silver with locks of our hair in each! I wear mine still between bands of diamonds and sapphires. Where is yours?

Dearest Odette, how I long to clasp you to my heart again! I am afraid you will think I have delayed answering your letter for a week with some idea of punishing you for your silence, for your hard-heartedness in having left me half of half a quarter of a century without a word. But this is not so; though I am not altogether sorry that fate should have given me an unsought-for taste of revenge. I could not answer your letter by return of post, as you begged me, for you addressed it to my old home in the Rue du Bac. My parents are still living there, and the letter was forwarded to my brother's house in Provence, to Claire Delmas number two, my niece and goddaughter. There is further, a Claire number three, to whom you must be introduced, a Clairette, who is already beginning to distinguish herself at the classes to which her mother has been taking her since the beginning of the winter. Education has made great strides since our time, and I am very proud of my little daughter. But you will think me dreadfully selfish. Before I begin upon Clairette I ought to ask you about the babies, who by this time, I hope, have dissipated your boredom. Do you not feel with me that our children console us for everything? They fill up all the blank spaces of life, their power is unbounded, they are a bond of union between natures that without them would have few points of contact.

How I long to see you, and yours! I even feel capable of treating

Mr. Nevil with civility, bitterly as I resented his stealing my friend. My fondest love, dear Odette.

CLAI'RE RÉNAL.

To Madame Rénal, Avenue Marceau.

March 8th.

Your amiability will not be put to the test, dearest Claire, so far as my husband is concerned. He is dead, which makes my return to Paris possible. Paris, the only place on the globe to which he refused to take me; the only place I cared to go to! And as to the babies! My dear, that is one of the duties in which I most conspicuously failed, one of the points in which my foreign inferiority to the natives was most strongly marked. My circle made me suffer for my shortcomings, I can assure you. Not my husband. He was the best of men, though he hated France. Perhaps only from jealousy and because I loved it too much. But my mother-in-law and all the rest of the family! My sisters-in-law have nobly responded to the Scripture exhortation : "Be fruitful and multiply." The rector of Beechgrove in speaking of them, may aptly draw upon the Hebrew metaphors of vine and olive branches! A tacit rebuke to me, the poor fragile weed, exotic and sterile! But what could be expected from a Parisian, and a Papist to boot!

Poor James was the only Nevil for generations back, who had ventured to seek a wife outside the Anglican communion. Naturally, divine wrath pursued him, and I have no children! But I notice that you begin at once to tell me of yours, before saying anything of your husband. And this, to a person so sharp-sighted as I have become in my long *tête-à-tête* with myself, is unpleasantly significant. It seems to say that you are first a mother and then a wife, and leads me to draw conclusions anything but favourable to M. Rénal. For oh! Claire, I had hoped that the romantic savour so lacking to my married life would be found in yours.

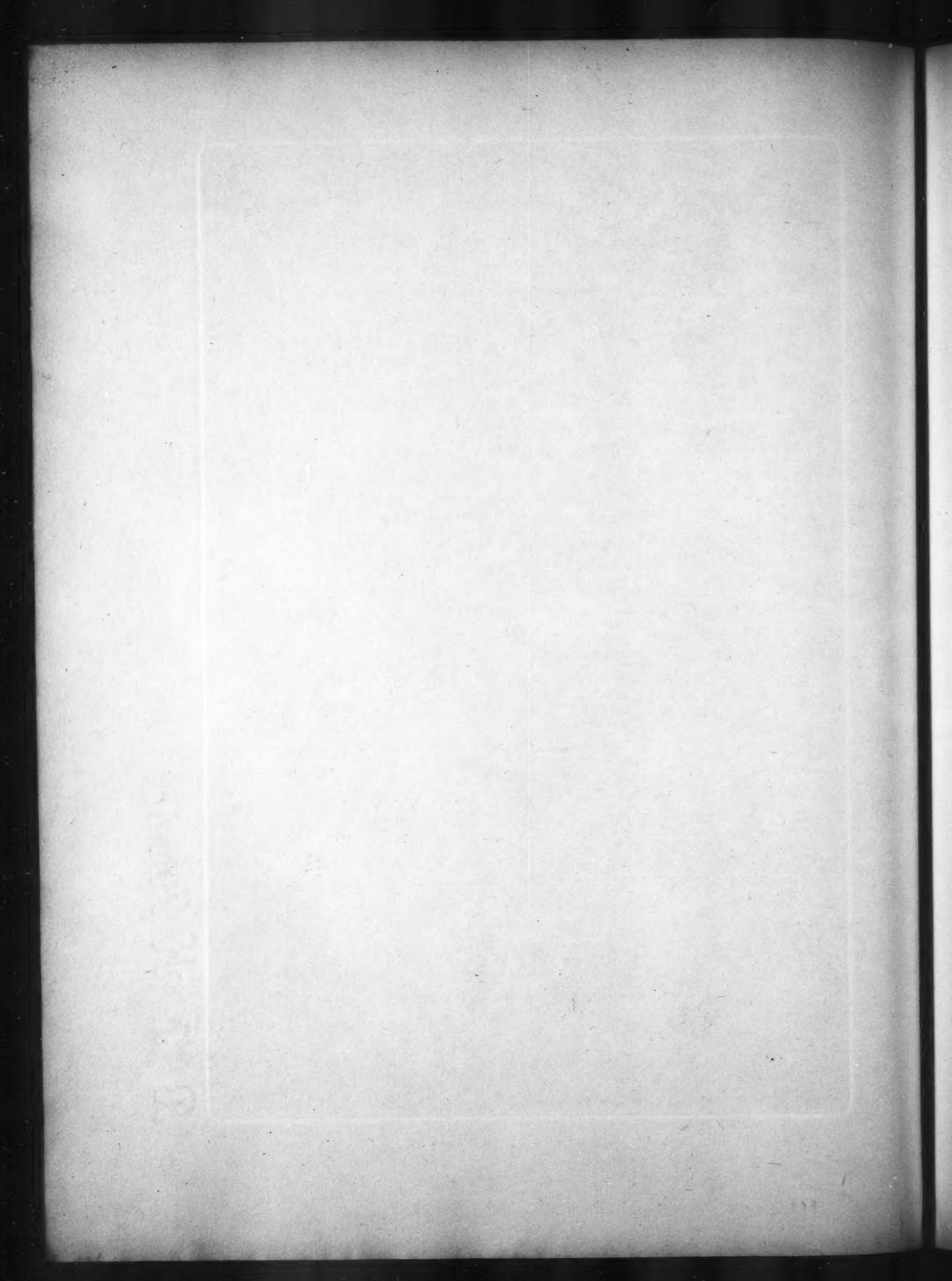
Throughout these long years of silence, for which you reproach me so affectionately, I have dreamt of you with a husband widely different from Mr. Nevil, who was, nevertheless, I repeat, kindness and uprightness personified, a true-hearted gentleman in every sense of the term. But

one wants something more than rectitude and devotion, after all! Can any woman be expected to feel happy with a man who insists on spending four months of the year on a yacht? What availed my sumptuous cabin and all Mr. Nevil's attentions, when I was obstinately sea-sick the whole time? Once safely on shore we might perhaps have attained to some degree of domestic harmony, had it not been, strange to say, for music! You will remember that music played an important part in Mr. Nevil's sudden attachment to me. He fell in love with my piano, almost as much as with myself. Well, I never touch it now. His violin made me give up playing. I loathe the very thought of music, I hate it as much as yachting, perhaps more. And you will understand me when I tell you that my husband practised as a rule five hours a day and that he never played in tune! If you tell me that these were very small failings, I can only say that I could have pardoned the poor virtuoso some great crime much more cheerfully, but treasons and infidelities never so much as entered his honest head. In many respects he was a model husband, and I know it was chiefly the difference of race, of mind and of temperament, that made sympathy between us impossible. He never felt it himself. You know me well enough to be sure that I did not embitter his life by useless complaints. His little Odette pleased him to the end without his quite knowing why, and conscious as he was of her being somewhat over-sedentary, dreamy, and fond of books, a little irreverent too, and given to raillery and sarcastic speech. With his yacht and his violin I made up the happiness of his life, and I am truly glad to think so; I should have been bitterly remorseful if he could ever have thought me ungrateful, for after all, he showed himself generous and disinterested in choosing a Cinderella like me. You remember with what rapture my cousin De Layrac, accepted his offer, without troubling to consult me much in the matter. She, too, had been generous to me after her fashion; she had educated me liberally at her own expense, ever since my tenth year, and my only claim upon her was that I bore the same name, and that I was the child of a distant kinsman who had squandered his last *sou*. My life indeed has been full of what people call strokes of good luck, of unexpected windfalls. Fate has really been

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kind to me, on the whole. And yet, I am sometimes so ungrateful for the gifts of the gods that I tell myself I have known very little happiness outside our childish friendship, and the remembrance of your affection. Your share of life's joys, dear Claire, I trust has been wider and more complete. You had a most loving and devoted mother, your fortunes made it possible for you to choose for yourself, so how is it that I find you touching lightly on the one subject of supreme interest to me, your marriage? I am not surprised that your letter with the news never came to hand. By comparing dates I find it must have arrived while we were away on our great Australian trip. Otherwise, you may be sure my curiosity would have got the better of my suicidal resolution and I should have written. Yes, suicidal is the only word for such a sacrifice. Your letters were the one pleasure of my life, and for that very reason I felt it wise to renounce them. They reminded me too keenly of the past, they made me rebel too bitterly against the present. If I had answered them I could not have refrained from confidences. In spite of myself I should have poured out grievances I determined to keep in my own heart. For I knew that, in the main, they were unreasonable, that I was wicked to brood over them. I admit this freely to you, now that I am free to speak of my sorrows. If I was unhappy, it was not James's fault, as you may have fancied. No, indeed. But, poor dear man, he was, unfortunately, part and parcel of an unendurable whole. The yacht, the five hours' practice, the early family breakfast, the perpetual fog, the awful Sunday hush—fancy, I had to hide like a criminal if I so far forgot myself as to gather mushrooms in the meadows or do a "patience" on that sacred first day!—the solemn condescension of my mother-in-law, resigned, yet outraged by my "French ways," mild as they had become; a certain cant strongly inimical to the independence of mind and tongue I could never wholly smother, and hundreds of other things all combined to make me wretched; none the less, that the fault lay no doubt with me, in the irreparable crime of my foreign blood. Seeing that the evil was without remedy, I thought it only dignified and reasonable to keep my own counsel; especially as I can neither confide nor recriminate by halves; the flood-gates once open, I lose command of myself. I had become an Englishwoman,

an Englishwoman I must remain. And one of the first conditions of such a consummation was to turn away the eyes of my mind from France, that France of which you, my old school friend, seemed a type. I wrote no more to you. But there are times when one forgets the firmest of resolutions. Had I received your letter, I believe my pen would have set to work on its own account with : "What is he like? Does he answer at all to the portraits we drew of him at the convent? An officer of Hussars, a divinely proficient *valseur*, tall, slender, with a conquering air, and a fiercely curled moustache? Is he even something better? Do you love him passionately? What is it like to be passionately in love?" It is not too late, even now. Think of all the questions I should have asked you years ago, and answer them for me in order. Tell me how your love story began, how it has developed under marriage. I shall never have patience to wait till we can talk it all over. I have accomplished my year of mourning under the sombre wing of my mother-in-law, and I was beginning to think I might at last transport myself and my little white-bordered, black crape bonnet (which, between ourselves, doesn't suit me at all badly) to the Continent. Some tiresome business matters, however, must it seems, be gone through first, and I may be detained another month. But, during this month, we can gossip by post, can't we? I shall feel as if we were back again in the little school-room where we had everything in common, and where we used to vow to each other that we would be old maids and live together.

*Claire to Odette.*March 11th.

Your penetration is at fault for once, dear Odette. I can assure you that my husband, Max Rénal, is as blameless as the late Mr. Nevil, peace be with him, and yet without my Clairette, who seems to have been sent for my consolation, I confess I should have my dark hours. Difference of nationality is not the only gulf that may part husband and wife. Indeed I begin to think the mere fact that one is a man, the other a woman,—the moral antipodes, as it were—sets them at cross purposes. I have never quite made out where the fault lies in our particular case,

and I should like you to arbitrate. But, first of all, I want you to believe that, at present, now that the storm is over, I am perfectly content with my lot. The storm was, indeed, but a passing one; the only traces of its wrath remaining consist in certain smothered mutterings amongst the members of my family. Its bursting in the first place was due, partly, it must be owned, to Max, but in a greater degree to my poor father and mother, who I am afraid, meddled too much in the young household.

Let me tell you, dear Odette, by way of preface, that you are more completely naturalized than you suppose. Who but an Englishwoman would write like a three-volumed "Tauchnitz" about loving madly and passionately? Is there such a thing in France as falling in love before marriage? And is not passion of any sort so old-fashioned a sentiment that we scarcely understand it when we read about it in novels?

I love my husband with all my heart; he and Clairette are dearer to me than anything in the world. But, all the same, I find "Gyp" much more intelligible than George Sand! Not that I am a typically "modern" wife. But even those who think least about fashion are under its influence more or less. Feeling depends as much on a turn of the wheel as costume; what was charming yesterday will be ludicrous to-morrow. A woman with passions would cut as absurd a figure in our modern society as would one of Balzac's heroines in turban and ringlets. And as to young girls—

Have you forgotten the preliminaries of your own marriage? Well, mine were identical, with this difference, that M. Max Rénal was younger, better-looking, and much more agreeable in every way than Mr. Nevil, and naturally pleased me better. I scarcely knew him myself, though his father and mine were schoolfellows and his mother and mine girl friends. Young men have so little time for formal visits, and Max, in particular, cared for no one outside a certain artistic set, of which his parents hardly approved. I had often heard Madame Rénal bemoaning her son's idleness, his distaste for those scientific pursuits in which all her family had distinguished themselves with substantial results. At college, his career had been marked by none of those successes of which parents are so proud. He had just managed

to take his degree, to lounge through his terms for the bar, and had shown no taste for any career in particular. A government office is the natural refuge for well-educated young men, not overburdened with zeal. Max was pitchforked into the Foreign Office. His parents were comforted to see him fairly seated at a desk at last. The next step was to get him married. At first he rebelled; but after a few weeks of holiday, which we all spent together in the Pyrenees, he changed his mind. When it was settled that I should become his wife, Max's salary was merely a nominal one. But this was of little moment. He had a private income of about the same extent as my portion, and his parents in giving him a profession thought less of his making money than of his having some fixed occupation. His foot was to be in the stirrup, as it were, so that he might be ready at the right moment to vault into the saddle of diplomacy, one of the most distinguished of callings, and one, I confess, very much to my taste, for I have travelled so little. But there was no hurry as to this; we both adored Paris, and our parents were not sorry to keep us near them as long as possible.

Max took little part in these plans for his future. He hates argument and discussion, and declares he never really put his foot down but once. This was when it was proposed that he should become a partner in his father's chemical works. But I think he rather overstates his case, for I have certainly seen him hold his own since, gently, it is true, but with invincible tenacity. You shall judge for yourself. Oh! he was very clever, very determined!

The first hint I had of it was about a fortnight before we were married. One morning he sent me one of those white bouquets it is the fashion to give one's *fiancée*, and hidden among the flowers a copy of the most delicious verses, at least they seemed so to me. Mamma thought them a little warm, but then we were to be married so soon! My mother-in-law raised her eyebrows and said nothing. Perhaps you have read the verses yourself, for they are included in the latest editions of *Irresses*. The poem is called *Ondine*.

Evidently these verses were not the work of a 'prentice hand. Our suspicions ought to have been awakened, my father's at any rate. But

he was so delighted to give me to the son of his old friend, there was such a perfect harmony in the tastes, the positions, the sentiments of the two families, that he would have winked at a good deal.

"Ah, the boy writes rhymes in his spare time. There's no harm in that!"

What more fitting under the circumstances than the presentation of a little bouquet to Chloris? So thought my dear father, no doubt, adding, I daresay, in his own mind : "If this most satisfactory marriage is further a love match, why, so much the better!" Other verses followed. I was enraptured, my parents indulgent. But when it came out that the "pastime" they had talked of so complacently was, as a fact, the chief occupation of the young man they had supposed to be at least serious, if not very industrious, their lamentations were loud indeed.

The day after our wedding poor Max made a confession which he seemed to think hardly necessary, so persuaded was he that his secret was already revealed by the missive he had inserted among my gardenias. He announced himself the author of a volume of verse, published anonymously about two years before, the success of which had been none the less brilliant that people were somewhat scandalized by its free treatment of certain subjects. I must admit that in the turmoil of emotion through which I had been passing, the revelation scarcely had its due effect. I have a vaguely remorseful recollection that I failed to appear sufficiently dazzled by the glory of the god who thus unveiled himself. There was an embarrassing pause after the dramatic proclamation, instead of the scene of effusion my husband had no doubt reckoned upon.

Think of the prince in the Arabian Nights who disguised himself as a merchant to gain access to the lovely princess of China. Imagine the supreme moment when he flings aside the base pretence and whispers to the mistress in his arms : "Yes! I am Camaralzaman!" If the lady appeared more startled than delighted he might reasonably feel a little disappointed. This was the case, I know now, with poor Max.

The thought that I had read none of his poems save the two or three modest and respectful sonnets I had inspired, comforted him somewhat. He at once set to work to show me what manner of man I had married,

to make me understand how great cause of pride I had in this metamorphosis of bureaucrat into poet. He presented me with a copy of the *Ivresses*, printed on parchment in a special type, and bound in the newest taste of modern æsthetics. Pearls before swine again! In those days I was given over to barbarous gilt-edged volumes, with moiré or velvet covers. Max has educated me since—in this as in other matters! He made a very touching little exordium. "I did not dare," said he, "to slip this jewel among your bridal gifts, for yesterday you were a child; but it belongs to my wife; it was my dearest treasure before I possessed her; it contains the best part of myself; all the joys, all the sorrows, all the dreams of my life; all the loves that foreshadowed, always brokenly and sometimes, alas! perversely, my love for you, my darling then unknown. Everything is written here. I give you my past, for, loving you, I have no right to hide anything from you. The present and the future are in your hands. You may mould them as you will, and I feel that my later works will far excel these by virtue of the happiness you will have brought me."

I remember every word of the little oration; it touched me to the heart, though later, in one of those rare moments when I found myself alone, I was greatly mystified in thinking it over. I opened the book as Pandora may have opened her box. Was it Pandora? I am afraid my mythology is rather misty. Pandora, I know it was, who had a box full of evils, but I believe it was that wretched Psyche who opened some other sort of box, I forget what, and instantly fell to the earth, poisoned by its noxious fumes. It seems harsh to compare the voluptuous pessimism of the *Ivresses* to a noisome miasma, but as a fact I was not equal to such strong food, and the effect it produced on me was one rather of terror than of admiration. I began to see that the pleasant young fellow I had married the day before, thinking him a creature of my own world, was in reality a being of a different genus altogether, eccentric, melancholy, atheistic, full of passionate speculation about things that seemed to me simple enough, perverse, almost corrupt in mind! His blasphemies filled me with horror! I understood later on that all the apparent impiety was no more than theoretic doubt, poetically manipulated, but at the

time, I knew nothing of such refinements. All I gathered from my studies was, that my husband did not believe in God, that he had gone through a number of very queer adventures, and that it would be much more difficult for me to make him happy than he, in the kindness of his heart, supposed. Thereupon I burst into tears. It was silly, no doubt, but you must allow that to change the sugar and water sipped by little girls for such a heady wine as this was enough to bemuddle a stronger brain than mine! When Max came in and found me weeping over a certain poem of which he was specially proud, an eloquent nightmare called *Annihilation*, he caught me in his arms enraptured. How strange that the cleverest men should be so obtuse, while the stupidest of us have so much quickness of instinct! Throughout our honeymoon, Max seemed perfectly unconscious of the sort of terror he inspired in me. I believe, indeed, he was unconscious of all save what was going on in his own mind, a sudden growth of new emotions, new and sweet too, if I may judge from the really charming verses, exquisitely delicate and tender, that he repeated to me in an impassioned, richly modulated voice, during those days we spent in Normandy, at Vertpré, dear old Vertpré, where I spent my childhood, where Clairette, too, was born, the spot I love most on earth.

Max is not very fond of the country, beautifully as he writes about nature. He says that impressions to be strong must be fugitive. Scarcely do we settle into a place before he wants to be off again. One day of delights is enough for him. I, on the contrary, like to rest, to enjoy. But these differences of taste, of course, did not proclaim themselves in our honeymoon days. Max was enraptured with the great woods, the mossy alleys, the old gray house, the distant roar of the sea, and, above all, with his stupid little wife. Yes, I was stupid, I know. I acknowledge it with a certain pride and a feeling of superiority over the Claire of those days, which proves I must have made some progress. Not as much as I ought to have done, I know. Max still takes on now and then the air of tender raillery with which he used to receive my naïve utterances. You will tell me that tenderness takes the sting out of raillery; no doubt; but still, it hurts me to know that in his heart he probably thinks of me with contemptuous pity. I imagine him remarking of me

as he often does of certain of my friends : "What a fool that dear good Madame X. is!"

You remember I was always a little bit susceptible—touchy, if you like—and very timid. When I see my lord and master's moustache curving in a particular smile that I hate—when I see his eyebrows raised with an expression of disdain, I always feel inclined to exclaim : "What have I done? What have I said?" I would a thousand times rather be beaten! You will understand that. Do you not declare you could have borne cruelty and infidelity better than Mr. Nevil's five hours' practice of the violin? I cannot go quite so far, for my part; I am jealous, jealous even of the past, and of all those odious women who inspired Max's *Pleurs Cruels*; *L'Amour qui tue*; *L'Énigme*; *Insomnie*; *Spasmes et Sanglots*, etc., things I cannot read without feeling outraged.

We came back to Paris, and presently the papers overflowed with productions both in prose and verse, boldly signed Max Rénal, in spite of remonstrances both from his family and mine. It was useless to tell him he would do himself harm in his profession. The signatures only multiplied; he neglected his work, and at last things came to such a pass that he was obliged to send in his resignation. I remember his announcing the fact with the most radiant air.

"It is a great mistake," I said, trembling.

"A mistake to renounce an irksome drudgery for a career marked out for me by past successes?"

"But writing verses and stories is not a career."

"You are the true daughter of your respectable father! You don't know how ugly those Prudhommesque maxims sound in your pretty mouth. Come, Claire, does it give you no pleasure to think you have married a poet instead of an indifferent government official?"

"My parents gave me to the official," I said, trying to be reasonable.

"But you loved the poet, at least I hope so. Or, since you prefer prose, set your affections on the author of *Tales told to Ninette*. You are Ninette, you know, Claire, my darling."

I insinuated timidly that our old friend, the Abbé Tabouret, thought the said *Tales* rather too "naturalistic" for the hearing of a virtuous woman,

whereupon the storm burst with incredible violence. Oh! I cannot describe to you how irreverently he belaboured my dear good director. It was our first quarrel. I begged him to control his tastes somewhat, or at least to subordinate them so far as to combine with their indulgence some serious pursuit, as so many other men do. He replied that if there were such men, they had the excuse of poverty, but that in his case, there was no such compelling force. Money, with us was free to fulfil its only great function, that of giving ease and leisure for the pursuit of art, the one reality of life. Further, that he had been cruelly deceived in me; that he had imagined I understood him, from the very beginning of our engagement, and that this illusion had developed his first attraction towards me; that I had the face of a Muse, with the soul of a Philistine. He said, in short, a number of things that I do not care to repeat. They hurt me terribly at the time, though their sting has died out since under the influence of his affection and repentance. For he regretted his hastiness, especially when he found I was loyal to him throughout, and valiantly defended him against outside attacks. He was assailed on every side, and this finally gained me over to his way of thinking, in spite of my doubts and antipathies.

My father never mentioned him but with withering scorn : "Your *Parnassien*, your *décadent*," etc.

You should hear papa's intonation of those two words, which he seems to think mean much the same thing. Mamma was horrified at the dangerous tendencies of his writings. She feared he sought inspiration in very bad company. "You could not be angrier if he had a mistress," I said to her one day.

"If he hasn't just now, he very soon will," she declared.

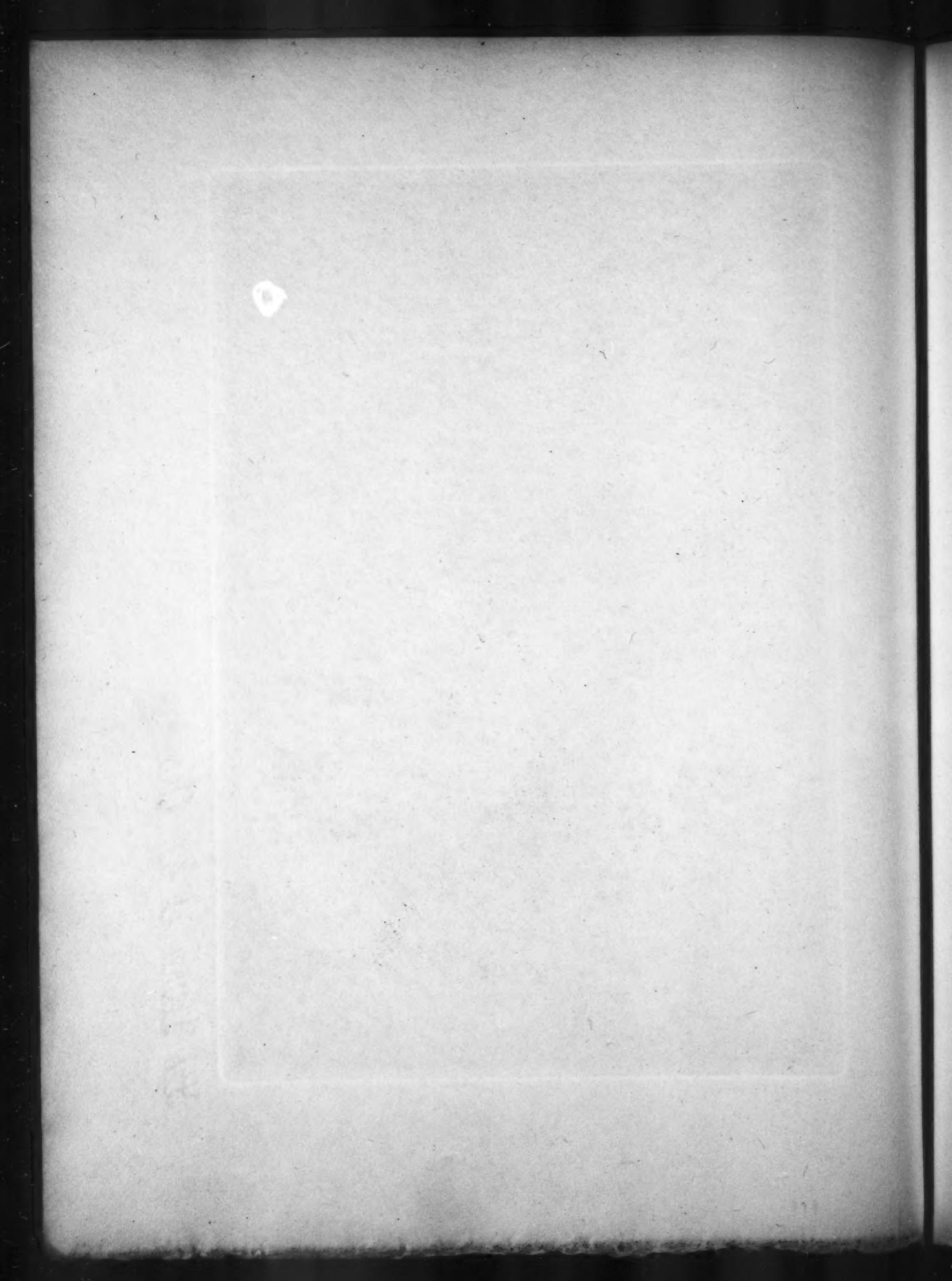
Really, if I had been guided by mamma, we should have had a series of ridiculous scenes, culminating in a separation! My mother-in-law scolded me for not knowing how to influence my husband. Thank Heaven, I have a certain amount of common sense! I thought it would be time enough to treat Max coldly when he began to neglect me. And he certainly did not neglect me, for Clairette made her appearance duly! I had a new interest, an interest strong enough to sweeten all the little rubs inseparable,

I suppose, from the happiest married life. I too have now an absorbing occupation; I am content to let my husband please himself in all things. He hates society, and rarely goes with me to any private entertainment, but he likes me to be seen in the world, so I don't shut myself up. I wish I could persuade him to endure the family dinners a little oftener; but he says irreverently that he has no idea of being *livre aux bêtes!* I must say that he never appears at the family gatherings without getting a sly slap from some one of the party. His successes have no effect against their antagonism. But I am proud of his genius, although, to be quite candid, I can't get over his choice of subjects. And I think a large portion of the public must be of my way of thinking for I notice his books never reach the same number of editions as those of some of his *confrères*, who have not half his talent.

When I ask him to take some little account of what people like to read, he replies that *he* likes the sort of thing he writes, and that unpleasant smile trembles on his lips again. Then I retire into my shell, for the mocking smile always reminds me of that unlucky day when I lost my prestige for good by remarking in the manner of my father, and, as it appears, of M. Prudhomme, that poetry is not a profession! It is not that his love for me has grown less since then, but it has become—how shall I put it?—more condescending, less unreserved. He still reads me his writings, but with a parade of caution, of diffident selection : “There is nothing in this that you will mind, my pretty prude,” or, “This was written expressly for you, Madame.” So he preludes the marks of confidence of which he evidently thinks me hardly worthy. I believe, indeed, that he has a certain contempt for all women. He is not very cordial to my friends. He says they are all cut on mamma's pattern, formed by her precepts. It seems rather hard, when I am always pleasant to *his* friends, and try to forget the wicked books they have on their consciences, and the still more wicked advice I know most of them are capable of giving. But to hear them you would fancy that *I* was the unwise counsellor, that *I* tyrannised over Max, that *I* clipped his wings! It is true, I did oppose his writing a play. The drama in verse he has just finished will bring him into contact with a world I dread—the world







behind the scenes, you know; the world of Mademoiselle Rosa Féline, that big blonde with darkened eyes, whose supple grace Max is always raving about, but who looks to me as loose-jointed as a clown. Max declares she is the woman of his dreams—from an artistic point of view, of course. But this saving clause doesn't prevent me from being on thorns all the time those odious rehearsals are going on, especially as, on each such occasion, there is a chorus from all my family : "What a convenient pretext rehearsals are!"

If Max is five minutes late—"Where can he be? At the rehearsal of his piece, I suppose. Claire, don't you feel a little jealous of Mademoiselle Féline?" And I am forced to play a part no less than Mademoiselle Féline herself, to act courage, indifference; to say gaily, lest they should think me a ridiculous dupe, that no doubt Max is at her feet, but that he will come back to me; that it is a good plan to be a little short-sighted at times; that it would be a nuisance to have one's husband always at home, etc. Fibs and phrases, a foolish gaiety that deceives no one, for I bungle terribly over my work, and they all know I am not so confident as I pretend to be.

Max comes home nervous and irritable. As the "first night" draws near he loses courage. He goes through the phase of depression that follows on exaltation. Rose-colour changes to black. He abuses the dinner; everything in the house is wrong. If you imagine that artists are easy to live with, you are mistaken. The least trifle exasperates them when they are in a state of what may be called suspended inspiration, and while you are racking your brains in agony to know how you can have offended, back they come, smiling, radiant with a joy as groundless apparently as their wrath; the key to some difficult situation has been found, some rebellious rhyme has been overcome! Let the whole world rejoice and be glad! I am beginning to accept these transitions philosophically, but at one time I lived in a chronic state of bewilderment. You will tell me that these are the merest crumpled rose-leaves in one's lot, passing clouds that hardly shadow the sunshine of happiness. And as I write them down, my woes seem to melt away. I feel that I have sketched them with too heavy a hand. My confidences have done me good; my

heart is as light again now that I have unburdened myself to my dear Odette, as I could do to no one else. Tell me how *you* would behave to a husband whose one great fault is that he cares more for printer's ink than for father or mother, wife or child, but who is otherwise truly lovable.

Odette to Claire.

March 15th.

How should I behave? I should simply adore him! To think of your being by the special favour of Heaven the wife of Max Rénal, and not telling me so at once, but leaving me to wonder what Rénal, Pierre, Paul, or Jacques, doctor, lawyer, or engineer, might be your husband. Imagine your writing of your house, your child, your little misunderstandings, your petty grievances, instead of beginning with: "Congratulate me! I was chosen by *him*, one of the princes of thought, one of the younger masters of modern art." I am tempted to tell you you are unworthy of your good fortune. After all, what do your trials amount to? You have had to learn that no man is a prophet in his own country, to struggle against the narrow prejudices of your former circle. But if the sufferings they were able to inflict had amounted to martyrdom, it should have been your part to bear it gladly and proudly. What would it have mattered if you had been forced to break entirely with your family? You would still have had him! You will say that I know nothing of family ties, that the only relation I had to renounce was my cousin Rogatiennne de Layrac, which renunciation did not call for much heroism. But I am putting myself in your place, as you asked me to do. And I know that in your place I should devote myself heart and soul to my husband, passionately, yet intelligently; that I should rejoice in his successes, that to please him I should sacrifice children, relations, friends, the whole world, if necessary. I should cultivate my mind to raise it to his level, I should set off my beauty in every possible way for his delight, I should neglect no art that might help me to retain his love, or to draw it gently back to me if it happened to wander for a moment, by force of one of those caprices which men of great imaginative powers cannot always resist, yet which mean less in them than in others. But indeed, if I were Claire,

as I remember her, with her delicate bloom, her fascinating dimples, her tangle of golden hair, I should make such cunning use of my many perfections that I don't suppose my husband would ever waver in his allegiance for an hour! However that might be, I should thank God night and morning for having given me the most ennobling and the most delightful mission a woman can have.

Does it never strike you, when you feel hurt by a little raillery, a little impatience on your husband's part, that *you* are perhaps in fault, that you have failed in the delicate sympathy, the quick perception necessary in dealing with a highly-wrought organization? Do you not sometimes forget that you, above all others, should be ready to understand, to divine, his every mood? You admit that you have been clumsy at times. Claire, I cannot deny that your letter surprised and grieved me. I see that at twenty-six you have not made much advance towards that decision and independence of judgment you somewhat failed in as a school-girl. I remember how little perception you sometimes shewed in your estimate of a new comer's character, how you were always content to leave the initiative in a game or a piece of mischief to others, though you joined in the fun heartily enough. In short, my dear little friend, you have been one of Panurge's sheep from your cradle, while I, on the other hand, was always the ringleader in every scrape, critical, impetuous, violent in my likes and dislikes, stimulated by contradiction. That a thing was forbidden was enough to make me desire it. It was nothing to me that I was singular in my opinions, I scorned to follow or to imitate. And such as you knew me, I am still. Therefore I know, that had I been you—you remember, you asked me to put myself in your place—I should have been the first to recognize my husband's genius. With him I would have braved all censure; side by side with him I would have struggled through the dark hours of probation and uncertainty, and I should have earned the joy of saying when success at last crowned him : I was the first to appreciate his powers.

In this last respect, I scarcely need to put myself in your place, for I was actually one of the first to fall in love with the little anonymous volume which was afterwards republished with the author's name. It

appeared in its first form shortly after my marriage, which had left me with a good deal of superfluous enthusiasm to work off.

The bookseller I had ordered to send me the newest French publications slipped the obscure little volume into a packet of much-talked-of literature, which I soon neglected in its favour. I have it still, worn by much use, and blurred here and there by tears, for the restless, passionate, self-tormenting spirit of the poems has become only too familiar to me. Thenceforward, I read everything Max Rénal wrote, his best and his worst. Some of his works take their places bravely on my book-shelves, between *Le Livre de mon Ami* and *L'Abbé Constantin*, while others I keep under lock and key in what I call the poison-cupboard, which contains certain samples of strychnine, arsenic and curare—alias Bourget, Daudet, Maupassant, and Co! I am not, I think, very corrupt, but really the anathemas here launched against “French wickedness” give a piquant savour to the very phrase.

Happy Claire! To think that *Ondine* was dedicated to you! How Fate mocks at our aspirations! You had visions of a handsome captain of Hussars who would carry you about with him from garrison to garrison; I used to dream of a man of letters or an artist, fired by the glimpses of such men caught in my cousin's drawing-room, on those rare occasions when I was summoned to relieve conversation by a little music. Then Cinderella would come down from her tiny room, where she usually sat alone, for my cousin did not, as a rule, suffer the serious business of her evening to be interfered with, and that business was to talk, and to talk literature or philosophy. Like Madame Geoffrin, the late Rogatiennne was fond of unity; she liked to be the pivot round which her whole circle revolved, but really, she flattered me by fearing the effects of my insignificant presence. I certainly should have passed unnoticed. Never did one of those men whose famous names made my heart leap, vouchsafe the least attention to the little school-girl, whose one merit was that she did not murder her Haydn or her Beethoven. (Nothing but classical music was allowed in Madame de Layrac's *salon*.) I remember they were nearly all thin, bald, and more or less haggard, and nearly all physically ugly, but their ugliness was full of expression and character, and seems to me

infinitely preferable to the coldly regular Anglo-Saxon beauty, in which one seeks flaw or charm alike vainly.

I used to take my part modestly in a quartette, and was never overwhelmed with praises of my performance. If, perchance, a word of kindly encouragement fell from the lips of some artist I had had the honour of accompanying, my good cousin had a way of insisting upon some mistake I had made, or had just escaped making, that effectually nipped my satisfaction in the bud. It was one evening when I was smarting under a more than usually severe criticism from her, and was further dejected by the wearing of a particularly shabby frock, that I first met Mr. Nevil. He had been introduced by a friend of my cousin's, who was anxious to prove to him that there were still *salons* in Paris. James was not a sufficiently good French scholar to appreciate the intellectual tournament in which he found himself involved. It seemed to him all dull enough; "rather tame sport," as he expressed it to me later on. He declared that the music had interested him a great deal more than the conversation, and the musician still more than the music. My "gipsy eyes," as he always called them, my dark gipsy eyes, had won his heart. He guessed, too, that I was Cinderella, and longed to play the prince on my behalf. The upshot of it all was, as every one knows, that he stayed in Paris much longer than he intended, that he became a constant visitor at my aunt's receptions, though he never woke to their social attractions, and that I was finally carried off to England, where I actually sometimes caught myself regretting my domicile with Madame de Layrac, meagre as were the joys I had tasted under her roof.

The glimpse of intellectual pleasures it afforded me left me with a sort of craving that refused to be satisfied by corporeal exercise. I was always a coward on horseback, and lawn-tennis tires me to death, though I have confined my share in the sport to looking on, without even attempting to understand the rules.

Oh! what would I not give to find myself again for a time among Parisians, in a society of wits, thinkers, men of letters, dilettanti, creatures of my own race, who have neither nerves of steel, nor "high spirits," who are not absorbed in maintaining a perfect equilibrium

between the health of their minds and the vigour of their bodies, in a society where the only ball that has to be kept going is that of light and brilliant repartee in good French! If my cousin had not betaken herself to a celestial Hôtel de Rambouillet, where, no doubt, she is disporting herself with the Arthenices and Sapphos and all the other blue-stockings whose traditions she so loyally maintained on earth, I believe I should go and throw myself into her arms, unaccustomed as they were to receive me, and beg her to let me come to her Tuesdays, promising, if she pleased, to shine only by an expressive silence! But you, I am sure, must move in a circle very different to that of Madame de Layrac. She, you know, only tolerated the ripest and most classic reputations. Many of her lions were Academic beasts of a somewhat grizzled and toothless order. Your husband must have gathered round him all the younger lights of modern art, an art which attracts me strongly, though it does shock me a little!

There! I have written a word so abused in England that I have not used it for years! Fancy my being shocked at last, after having shocked other people for so long! But I must tell you it will take something more to do it than the trifles that scandalize you and your good mother. Parisians as you are, you seem to have a great respect for "Mrs. Grundy," as they say here, meaning the conventions of society, against which we of the minority are in opposition. I shall be against you both, I warn you. I shall range myself on the side of harassed, calumniated, persecuted genius!—But I lay down my pen and laugh. How absurd it seems for us to be almost quarrelling already, and about a gentleman of whom I know nothing, personally at least, and in the character of your husband. As to Max Rénal, I believe I know him a great deal better than you do!

Claire to Odette.

March 20th.

You were right, you are the same Odette, frank, amusing, and original, and unlike any one else I have ever known. Your letter, in spite of its comical exaggerations and paradoxes, is a capital sermon. As I laughingly

read it through, I acknowledged that I had much to learn from you, and that I was perhaps ungrateful for my lot in life.

Thereupon I gave Max a kiss, and read him, not all you said—I don't want to make him fatuous—but that part of your letter in which you speak so eloquently of his genius. He exclaimed that it was a pity I had not a few more friends like you. And your discrimination furnished the text for a fresh tirade against certain other folks! But he was flattered, very much flattered! No matter how vain and empty a woman may be, she is never so completely lifted off her feet by homage as a man of genius. I have been tempted to try my hand myself on Max occasionally, but somehow my compliments generally miss fire. He receives them in the same spirit in which he sometimes reads a laudatory notice of his works, which he lays down with the remark that he would prefer to be horsewhipped intelligently.

Alas! I know my timid enthusiasm is seldom rightly directed. But is it my fault? I was not fitted by education to understand and satisfy a modern man of letters. My mother, when she formed my taste, such as it is, did not think it necessary to initiate me into these latter-day subtleties. I was brought up on the literature of the seventeenth century and Max, as you know, is not at all in touch with the seventeenth century. We love each other very dearly in spite of my ignorance, and I feel sometimes as if it only needed so slight a thing to dissipate the floating clouds that darken our horizon!

You must still scold me whenever you think I need it, won't you? I want other advice than mamma's, so I am counting upon you. By the way, what do you mean by writing of being in France again for a time, as if you were only going to pay us a flying visit? What is there to prevent your settling altogether in Paris? We would take up our pleasant friendship again, and Max would no longer be able to say that all my friends are beautifully dressed dolls, pretty nonentities. But you must not expect to find anything like your cousin Rogatienne's receptions in my house. I have never attempted anything of the sort, for many reasons. In the first place, I have none of the qualities essential in the mistress of a *salon*. I am not individual enough, my habits of thought are too

vague and inconsequent. The nearest approach to it with me is "my day," the ordinary "at home" day when everybody comes in pell-mell to chatter for ten minutes and sip tea. Max rails against the foolish custom, but really I find it very convenient, for it enables me to have all the rest of the week to myself, and how else should I find time to pay visits, look at the shops, go to my dressmaker, and play with Clairette? My days are entirely filled up with a series of little duties, which I neither could nor would lay aside for other interests. Besides, Max would be very much against your idea. He detests anything in the nature of a clique. He and his friends would never have been inveigled into attendance at your cousin's famous Tuesdays. I think I have hit upon an arrangement much more to their taste. One evening in every week I leave Max free to receive his friends. He gives a bachelor dinner which entails neither fuss nor ceremony. On these occasions, I disappear. I invite myself to spend the evening with mamma. I began this first on Clairette's account. I thought it was a good precedent to set for the future. The talk she would hear at table would do her no good, and her little ears are already very sharp. Besides, Max gets out of an irksome family function in this way. I try to arrange everything for the best. It is often difficult.

Dear Odette, I have forgotten to tell you that after I had read Max all the charming things you wrote about him, he of course asked the question a man was bound to ask under the circumstances, as if praise were valueless unless it come from beautiful lips : "Is she pretty?" Unfortunately I had only a very old photograph of you to shew him, and one that does not do you justice in the least. But nevertheless, he pronounced you to be very nice-looking, although you are dark, and, in theory, he only admires fair women. Alas! Féline is fair. Fairer than I am, even!

Odette to Claire.

March 25th.

No, I am not going to send you any more lectures. I shall keep them all for the time when we find ourselves *tête-à-tête* by the fireside.

Then I shall perhaps tell you there is at least one English institution which has my unqualified approval. That institution is "the nursery." No Englishwoman of means, however fond a mother, thinks it well to play the part of nurse or governess. Englishmen spend a great deal of time in their own homes, but then they expect their homes to be made pleasant for them, and this is hardly compatible with the constant presence of children. It would be better for you all if Clairette had a special domain where she would see and hear nothing not intended for her eyes and ears. But you prefer to sacrifice your husband and yourself. I think your men's dinners the most odious of inventions! They seem to me an outrage upon civilization. Surely an hour or two in the smoking-room at the end of the evening would answer very much better. You seem to be recklessly throwing away your influence. I should not wonder if all the woes you complain of were due to this foolish abdication of your powers. Promise me that when I come we shall both appear at the first bachelor dinner your husband gives?

And now I have a grievance of my own! Why, perfidious Claire, did you shew that hideous little photograph of me, taken just after an illness, when I was a mere bag of bones with cropped hair? If I have any good points at all, they are my figure and my hair. My hair is unfortunately black, but I hope M. Rénal will forgive me that, in consideration of its length, its thickness, and its silky ripples. I really think my hair must be pretty, for even in this country, where beautiful hair is so common, every one admires it. I used to mourn over my ugliness, taking it on trust from my photographs, and my cousin's candid comments. Mr. Nevil's suffrages hardly reassured me; I knew he had so little taste in most things. But it is now evident that other people like my looks—people who have every right to be critical! And this brings me back to the question you asked me in your last letter, as to why I should not come and live in Paris altogether. I should like to of all things, dearest Claire—but—there are reasons which make it possible for me to think of returning to England. Among our neighbours at Beech-grove is a certain young man, who, until quite lately, was only an unimportant younger son of a great English family. By the premature death

of an elder brother, he is now Lord Melton, the possessor of a seat in Parliament, of an Elizabethan castle, and of an income of eighty thousand pounds. When this gentleman was known as Ralph Ashley, he lived from year's end to year's end, surrounded by dogs and horses, in an old red brick house, apparently very damp and very mouldy, and spent his time chiefly on race-courses and in the hunting-field.

I think I told you my husband was not a great rider, his tastes lying rather in the direction of aquatics, but my brothers-in-law are very keen sportsmen, and hunt regularly three days a week. They never failed when discoursing of that important beast, the fox, to bring in Mr. Ashley's name, in connection with some tale of prowess. As I do not ride, and hate races, I seldom saw him except at tennis-parties, and his image came to be always associated in my mind with those interminable "sets" that I avoid like the plague. You cannot imagine the importance of that horrible tennis in an English country house. Every afternoon in summer the park gates are opened to admit a stream of pony carriages, phaetons, and dog-carts, with their cargoes of players. Nothing but a prior engagement for some other tennis is considered sufficient excuse for staying away. The guests arrive eager for the fray. No matter how attractive the mistress of the house, none of her male visitors waste time in attentions to her. After a hurried shake hands, they leave the drawing-room for the dressing-room. In a few minutes they reappear, dressed, or rather undressed, for the game, in a flannel shirt, a sash knotted round their waists to keep up their flannel trousers, flat shoes with india-rubber soles to prevent them from slipping; sometimes a little cap covers their close-cut hair, and keeps it in order, in spite of the furious exercise. Chalk lines mark out the two "courts" as they are called; in the middle is stretched a net, over which the balls must be hit. The match begins. Usually impassive faces beam with pleasure, the gravest men seem suddenly transformed into romping schoolboys, until, having apparently got rid of their superfluous vitality, exhausted the *anima spiriti*, they resume the cold correctness of manner which is held to be the mark of a "perfect gentleman," and go back refreshed and strengthened to the ordinary business of life. But this consummation is not reached till the light begins to

fade, after several hours of frantic gymnastics, interrupted only by hasty visits to the tables set out with cakes, sandwiches, and sherry. In these brief pauses, the victors and the vanquished discuss their strokes, snatch a hurried bite or sup, and return to the charge. Mr. Ashley, now Lord Melton, is one of the most indefatigable of players. To see him running, jumping, and laughing, you could never believe that presently he would subside into the ordinary manners of the rigid society under which all this almost infantine gaiety lies dormant. I may add that he gains very much in appearance by these ebullitions, his beauty being of that athletic order which shows to advantage in violent motion. Beauty is perhaps rather too strong a word to use in connection with Lord Melton. He is tall and well built; but his whiskers are too straight, his curls too much inclined to red, and clipped too close; he has a complexion like a young girl's sprinkled all over with freckles, and slightly tanned by the sun of India, where he spent many years of his life. Such as he is, however, he passes for an Apollo; since he came into the title, be it understood. Up to that time he attracted very little attention.

The pursuit of eldest sons is carried on as eagerly in England, as heiress-hunting in France. When the fortunate young man enters into possession, everything in the market is trotted out for his inspection. The eyes of all the marriageable young ladies and of all their mammas turn to him from one end of the kingdom to the other. No stratagem is too audacious, that tends to the capture of the prize. You think I am a long time coming to the point? I want you to properly appreciate the situation.

You have seen that I knew very little of Lord Melton when my husband died, though I heard occasionally of his fine seat on horseback, of his victories in such and such a steeple-chase, of his breaking his collar-bone in some particularly big jump. His conversation, as far as I knew, was chiefly confined to judicious observations in the newest sporting slang on the Derby or Ascot. But after Mr. Nevil's death, his visits to Beech-grove became much more frequent, though he was now obliged to quit the red brick house, and hold high state at Melton Hall, which is not on

our side of the county. It began to be whispered that Ralph was in love; no doubt with one of my sisters-in-law. The three are equally well calculated for the making of conquests. The eldest, Isa, always reminds me of a swan, with her snowy skin, her long graceful neck, her supple elegance of carriage, and to complete the analogy, her big flat feet; but these are easily hidden under trailing skirts. The second, Maud, has the small exquisite head of a Greek statue, stuck unfortunately on the end of a broomstick. She is great at archery, and shoots magnificently. Had she lived in the days of the Amazons, there would have been no need for her to undergo the operation to which they submitted with a view to proficiency. Kate, the third, is the most delicious looking wax doll imaginable; a compound of azure and rose and snow. She is fresh and delicate as a flower, and has about as much intelligence; but who complains that a flower is stupid? Stupid or not, Kate flirted with Lord Melton as much as propriety would allow. I should have "laid long odds" on her, as our sporting friends say, and I never even dreamt for a moment that the prize would fall to me—to me, who had not an idea of competing.

But it seems that my lord admires my gipsy eyes as much as Mr. Nevil, though he declares they frightened him so terribly at first that he dared not tell me so. The unexpected news of my projected visit to France brought matters to a climax. I see his face now, poor fellow! He had come over to lunch, and was discussing a plateful of cold pie with the vigorous appetite which is one of his characteristics. The coquettish sallies of the three Graces eager for his overthrow, seemed to be meeting with slight response. Something was said about a picnic they had been planning, and Lord Melton referred the question to me, when my mother-in-law interposed with :

"Odette will not be here next month. She is going to see her friends in Paris."

The young man coloured to the roots of his yellow hair, laid down with trembling hand the knife and fork he had been plying so vigorously, and replied to Isa's request that he would come and see her horse, which she had lamed, with : "No thank you, I never take it."

There was a general laugh, as we left the poor fellow to recover himself.

An hour later, as I was strolling by myself in the park, he suddenly appeared at the end of an alley. As he advanced to join me, he changed colour several times. Those transparent complexions are horribly treacherous. I am not surprised that their owners should be generally shy. I have still the same even pallor that distinguished me as a girl—a great advantage, if one wants to hide emotion.

He was almost as pale as I when he reached my side, and his lips trembled with suppressed feeling.

"What is this I hear, Mrs. Nevil," he said, plunging at once into his subject with an attempt at a smile. "Are you really going to forsake us? Shall you be away long?"

"I hardly know," I answered with perfect frankness. "It will depend upon how I feel when I get there. If I find Paris as delightful as I think I shall, it is possible that I may settle there for good."

His lips quivered more obviously. Then, with the desperate courage of a coward, he suddenly burst out :

"I meant to wait till you had laid aside your mourning, before telling you what, no doubt, you saw long ago. But you are returning to your own country, and I feel that you may be tempted to stay there. At least you shall know that if you decide on such a course, you will make me the most miserable of men!"

He miserable, that muscular, prosperous, young athlete! I stared at him in bewilderment.

"I know," he went on, stammering a little, "at least, I fancy, that the life at Beechgrove is not quite to your taste. Believe me, everything should be very different. I would study your every wish."

I was still silent, too astonished to reply! Was he really asking me to marry him? This simple young man, who hitherto had hardly noticed my insignificant presence, whose whole mind seemed given up to sport, had, it appeared, fathomed the secrets I imagined no one guessed at. Was it possible? Undoubtedly so, for he continued, with a more assured smile :

"You need not be afraid of me. I have no yacht, and I can't play any musical instrument."

"That is certainly a great attraction in my eyes," I said, trying to take the whole affair lightly; "but, my dear Lord Melton, I don't understand why the announcement of my little journey should suffice to bring you, metaphorically, to my feet."

"Oh, I have been in love with you for five years. It began just after I came home from India."

"I never saw the least sign of it," I said, incredulously.

"I hope not," he said gravely, fixing a pair of limpid eyes on my face, eyes full for the moment of that same fire of excitement I had seen kindled in them by lawn-tennis, only perhaps a little more intense. "You were my friend's wife then. Duty——"

Duty! That is a word English people never weary of harping upon! "Duty! It is my duty!" Heaven forgive me, but I have taken quite a personal dislike to duty, and feel capable of a wicked toleration for everything that wanders from its righteous paths. How many times have I checked an impatient shrug as the two syllables fell sharp and metallic from my mother-in-law's thin lips, or were mumbled with hypocritical compunction by one of my husband's brothers, who occasionally so forgot its sacred claims as to lock himself up, and drink more port than was good for him. It exasperated me afresh in the mouth of this honest young lord. He had been in love with me for five years, and I had had not the least inkling of the truth. He had only distinguished me above Kate, Maud, and Isa, by treating me with a shade more reserve. Icy propriety, indomitable self-control, such was the response his passion had vouchsafed to certain harmless advances I made to him, impelled by my unspeakable sense of boredom, though I abominate freckles! I felt piqued at Lord Melton's strength of will, angry with myself for my own want of penetration. I had seen so much of him, and never by word or sign had he betrayed himself. Might he not have given me some hint of his feelings, trusting me to take care of myself? I felt defrauded. It would have amused me to watch the struggle in the breast of that muscular Christian—Lord Melton is the very type of the energetic

gentlemen thus described by Charles Kingsley—against a temptation embodied in me. My face must have expressed something of my chagrin, for he added with another brilliant blush : "I know I have no right to speak so soon. I would have waited, but I felt that if I let you go, I should lose you; do not go, dear Mrs. Nevil."

I confess I was flattered. My lover's figure had the advantage of a very seductive background. A vision arose in my mind of Melton Hall as I had once or twice seen it; the stately building in its immense park of giant oaks and sunny sward, dotted with flocks of sheep and herds of deer; the vast court-yard beyond the vaulted archway, that seemed to invite the entrance of one of Walter Scott's cavaliers; the gallery with its double row of family portraits, recalling those Court beauties of Kneller or Lely, who smile at you from the walls of Hampton Court, all the magnificence of an establishment as far superior to our pretty Beechgrove as a palace to a cottage. With one bound, I might pass from my place among the country gentry of Leicestershire to the most brilliant social position. There are certainly many advantages to be weighed. But nothing can get the better of my intense longing to taste my new liberty.

"Nothing can make up to me for my own country," I say, evasively; "I must return."

"Certainly, we will go to Paris every year."

But by Paris I mean something more than the Hôtel Meurice, with its English visitors and English arrangements, and English-speaking servants. Lord Melton's ideas of Paris, on the other hand, evidently centre at Meurice's. I express my sense of his kindness, but declare very decidedly that I mean to spend the rest of my term of mourning with some old friends in France. I see from his dejected look that he thinks this continental project is fraught with terrible dangers.

"I must submit, if you have made up your mind," he says with a sigh. "But give me some little hope, at least."

"I am deeply touched, greatly honoured, dear Lord Melton, by what you tell me. I like you very much. I have a great regard for you, as a friend, but——"

"But you do not love me, you are going to say!"

" You must wait a little. I cannot tell. The whole idea is so new to me."

" Well, may I come and see you in Paris?"

" Certainly not. It would be most improper."

" Really? But why? I can't see that; especially if we were engaged."

" But then you see, we are not engaged—yet."

" At least you will let me write to you?"

" If you like, but I don't promise to answer your letters, for I am frankness itself, and I might have to write things that would give you pain. I know myself. I shall fall in love with France again."

" Oh, I shan't mind that, if you will promise not to fall in love with a Frenchman—and we will live wherever you like—Odette."

Odette, indeed! He pronounced the name with a mixture of shame-facedness and bravado that amused me, as if he thought that in calling me by my name, he somehow took possession of me against my will.

" All I will promise is this. The Frenchwoman, Odette de Layrac, shall write her impressions every day to Mrs. Nevil. It will be a sort of self-examination. One can't have a better confessor than oneself. And in reply Mrs. Nevil shall write all that you yourself could urge in favour of England. When I come back, I will place this novel correspondence in your hands. It will show you the state of my mind, and of my heart. What do you say?"

" I say that you are playing with me, while I am terribly in earnest."

" I am in earnest too, I assure you. But I want to be quite sure of myself, to know that if I renounce the things that now seem to me most delightful, I shall not regret my choice when it is too late."

He answered that he would respect my wishes always, and I rewarded him by a few kind words.

Now you understand, dearest, why I said that I was not quite clear about my future. To be Lady Melton, to carry off the prize not only from Maud, Kate, and Isa, all younger and more beautiful than I, but also from all the marriageable young ladies of Great Britain! The prospect has its charms. But then, on the other hand, it would be delicious to live in Paris just as I please, with the ample means my husband generously

left me, and the scale weighs down very heavily on this side, strange as it may seem. We will talk over the pros and cons together!

Claire to Odette.

March 30th.

Why did you not tell me sooner? Had I known that I was only to find my friend to lose her again, I should have been less jubilant, and my disappointment would have been less in proportion. I see we are to have Lord Melton's *fiancée* with us for a month or two, that is all. And I have been so counting upon the idea of keeping you always.

You do not tell me to forget my castles in the air, but this is what you mean. And before your arrival I begin to dread the farewell. How true it is that all our joys have a dash of pain in them! I had so much need of something to look forward to, something to divert my mind from the sufferings of the last few days. Max's piece has been acted. It is a great success, but Mademoiselle Féline has carried off half the laurels, and my husband is not jealous. He triumphs with her, he lays his trophies at her feet, declaring that nothing but the exquisite subtlety of her genius could have saved the somewhat scandalous situation in which he had involved his heroine. It is true. I myself could not help acknowledging that her rendering gave grace and sympathy to an otherwise repellent phase of passion, one of those strange complications of morbid feeling in the painting of which Max excels, as he does in any analysis of things unusual and perverse. I often think it would be better for him to enjoy less of public favour, to be warned by some hostile demonstration of the danger of such persistence. The victory of author and actress was full of bitterness for your poor Claire. It would not be easy to tell you all I went through at the dress rehearsal, and on the first night. Imagine, if you can, the domestic drama *off* the stage. Think of me seated in a front box, mamma by my side, Max behind me. The harmonious murmur of verse, broken by occasional applause, fell on my ears, without carrying any meaning to my brain. My whole attention was riveted on the pretty painted face, the languishing eyes fixed on our box, whenever the exigencies of the part allowed. I could not see Max without turning round in my seat, but the expression in that woman's

eyes, her smile, told me that they were exchanging glances of intelligence. I felt as if I must cry out : "Not to my face, at least not to my face." Every now and then some caressing word would reach us, which she accentuated by a look at Max, and a little movement of her painted lips that was almost a kiss. But the crowning torture is to know that all my bitter thoughts are shared by mamma. She fans herself furiously, breathless with anger. Her face, her movements, say as plainly as speech : "Can't you see, poor little fool, can't you see? Well, so much the better for you."

Oh, yes, I see only too well. I am trembling with suppressed emotion. I bite feverishly at my handkerchief, tearing the lace in shreds. What suffering may be crowded into the space of one short evening! Between each act friends come and congratulate me. Why? Because I have a rival against whom I am powerless, who has every advantage over me? She is the Muse, and I am the prosaic housewife. She is Vice, brazen, seductive—I am Virtue, dull, timid, *bourgeoise*.

"How delighted you must be," is the parrot cry around me.

I feel inclined to answer : "Don't you see that I am furious, miserable?" Max has left us; no doubt he is with her, in her dressing-room. The chorus continues : "How magnificent the Féline is to-night." Max's voice chimes in at this juncture, and I have to put on an air of calm expectation, as he sits down behind me, bringing with him a strong waft of tuberose, the scent of his goddess, no doubt.

"You look tired, my poor Claire."

"Oh, no, not at all."

"Perhaps the piece bores you? Come, there's nothing to cry about. I think we are all a little bit unstrung to-day. But it's a success, a wonderful success."

I answer with an ironical "Really?" which surprises him. He shrugs his shoulders, saying to himself, no doubt : "My wife is a little goose." And the next moment his eyes are fixed on the stage, and he sees nothing but Mademoiselle Féline, whose death agony brings down the curtain amid a storm of applause. God knows I should blush to be like such a creature, yet I cannot help envying her. I envy her her power of making Max

happy, of adding lustre to his success. I say to myself : Yes, that is what he likes, that complexion made out of red and white chalk—I am only fresh and healthy—that gliding serpentine grace, incompatible with the roundness of my figure—that scent of tuberose ; I always use violet. The tears well up in my eyes again. This time Max thinks they are caused by the dramatic catastrophe. He presses my hand. It is thus we enter into each other's moods ! And now he goes off every evening to the theatre, and comes back, no longer feverish and agitated as he was on the first night, but radiant with satisfaction. Then I say to myself : He has been to see her ! I imagine all sorts of horrors. I receive him coldly and suspiciously. Oh, Odette, I feel that I am becoming disagreeable, ill-tempered. I shall end by estranging him altogether. If only you would come and help me ! At the pass things have now reached, we are sadly in need of some third person, affectionate and intelligent like you, to draw us together again. I have discovered an *appartement* quite close to us, new, charmingly furnished, bright and cheerful. The very thing for you. And in two months' time we would all go to Vertpré together. Promise me you will come. I am so dreading that Max will be bored this summer. I am afraid our Norman woods will be a poor substitute for his painted alleys, and that the perfume of real flowers will seem insipid after a certain extract of tuberose ! But with the two of us, we might manage to amuse him. You shall read us the famous letters destined for Lord Melton. Your idea of a correspondence between the two individualities which meet in you, the Frenchwoman by race, the English matron, more or less, by adoption, is highly piquant. We will do our best to strengthen the former in her leanings towards a final return to her native soil, and we will wage war against any arguments the latter may bring forward in favour of her importunate Lord Melton, his rank, his riches, and domains.

I will come to your aid when I see you wavering. Max himself will help you. He takes quite an interest in the scheme, and says you must be an unconscious psychologist of a very high order. I must tell you that I read your letter to him to distract his mind a little from Mademoiselle Féline. She, I am sure, has neither ideas nor words beyond

those she learns by heart, and I should say her emotions are about as superficial as the complexion she composes with so much skill.

Odette to Claire.

April 2nd.

At last, at last! I have received a final handshake from Lord Melton, and now I am doing my best to escape the moral lecture with which my mother-in-law always heralds her majestic farewell embrace. She has come to see me off at Folkestone. To-morrow, Heaven be praised, I embark alone in that thrice-blessed boat, and in a few hours I shall see for myself whether the evil is so grave as you imagine. I am tempted to think it is nothing but the admiration of an author for the sympathetic interpretation of his work, an admiration which, had you generously shared from the outset, you would now have had influence enough to curb. Good-bye for the moment. I look lovingly at the restless grey sea. Beyond those angry waves which I shall pass over in two short hours, lies the land of France. Another hour or two in the train, and I shall be in Paris, with you, and your husband. I am almost as impatient to see him as to throw myself into your arms, and that is saying much.

TH. BENTZON.

(*To be continued.*)





FRANZ VON SICKINGEN

THE LAST OF THE GERMAN KNIGHTS

OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

OETHE has portrayed, with admirable genius, one of the last representatives of the German chivalry of the Middle Ages, the famous Goetz von Berlichingen, him "of the iron hand," who boasted that for sixty years he had, like a "good comrade of fortune and of victory," served through many private wars, broils, and quarrels of all sorts, such as were common enough then in Germany. But Franz

von Sickingen has all the more claim to be regarded by history as the last and most famous of those knights of the high road, riflers and plunderers of the prosperous German towns, in that he played a part of some consequence in politics in the reigns of

the German Emperors Maximilian and Charles V, and of the French King Francis I, and that he well-nigh carved out for himself, with his sword, a fine estate which would have made him one of the most powerful princes of the Empire.

* * *

Franz von Sickingen was one of those petty German nobles who dwelt in castles perched high up in the hilly country between the Moselle and the Rhine, where they exercised as a privilege of birth and in defiance of the Emperor's authority, and without respect of persons, what was still known as the right of the fist (*Faustrecht*). He was born in 1481, two years before Luther, at the castle of Landstuhl, which, like Ebernburg, another of his castles, crowned one of the loftiest summits of the Hunsrück chain, not far from Kreuznach; it was difficult of access, the way to it lying through dense forests of undergrowth, barren vineyards, or fields badly tilled by the wretched peasantry. His father was that worthy rival of Goetz von Berlichingen, who, seeing once a harmless flock of sheep attacked by wolves, exclaimed : "Good luck to you, good luck, dear comrades!" He was, too, a rival of John von Selbitz, the true counterpart of Goetz, who having only one foot, as the latter had but one hand, used none the less to set fire to the castles of the Bishop of Bamberg. "Great God!" said the good Emperor Maximilian, speaking of these two men, "one of them has but one hand and the other but one foot, and yet they do as much harm as they could do even if they had both feet and both hands!" One day the city of Cologne had deprived Sickingen's father of a poniard, with which he was walking about the streets, in defiance of municipal regulations. He took an oath with his companions to set fire to the four corners of the city, and he would have done so, had not the City Council been warned in time.

It was in this atmosphere that young Franz von Sickingen grew up. In vain did the Emperor strive to enlist these turbulent men in his service for domestic or foreign expeditions; in vain, when these knights, in want of work or booty, returned to their old independent life of adventure and brigandage, did the Imperial Chamber, the supreme tribunal of justice, make

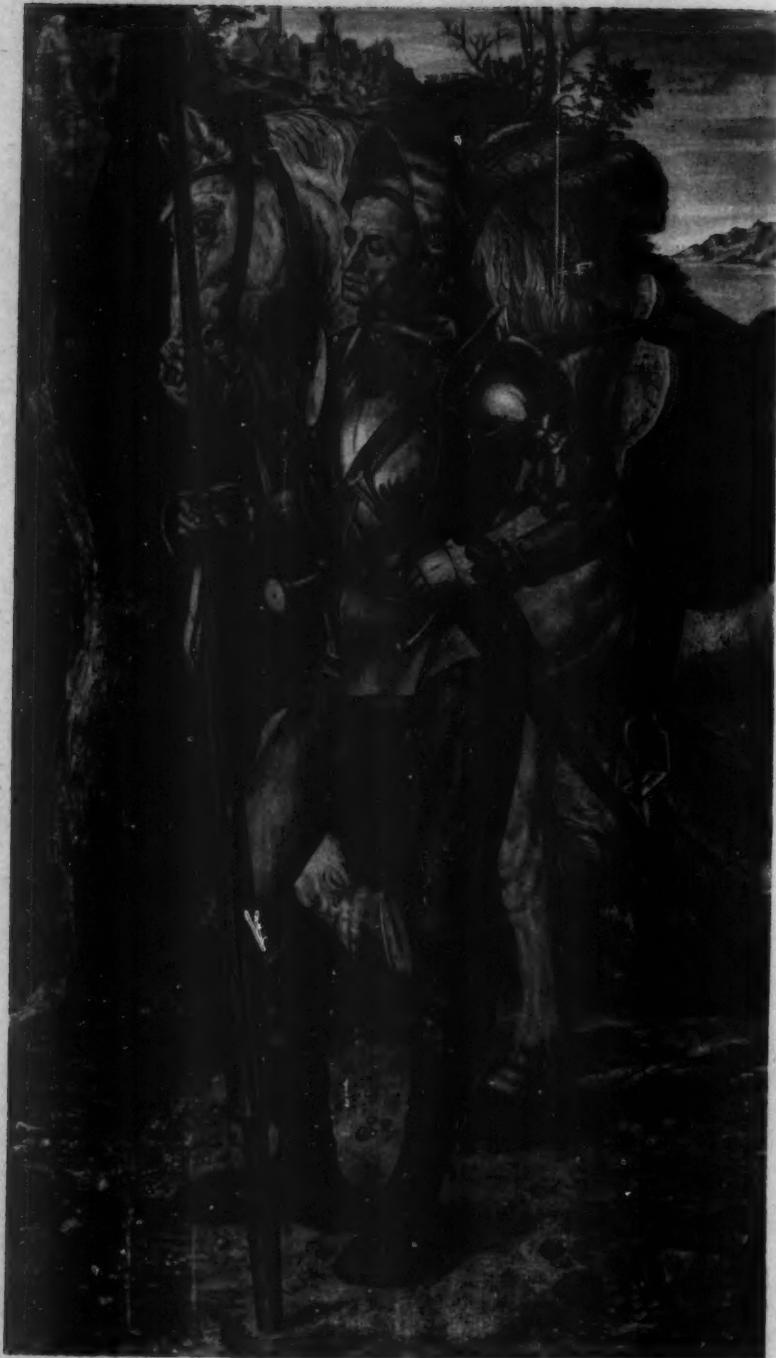
an effort to take some action against these disturbers of the public peace, and send the *posse comitatus* against them; they laughed the judgments of the court to scorn, and formed themselves into dangerous bands, even against the Princes or chiefs of Circles, who sometimes wanted their help, and who treated them with consideration when they were not their accomplices.

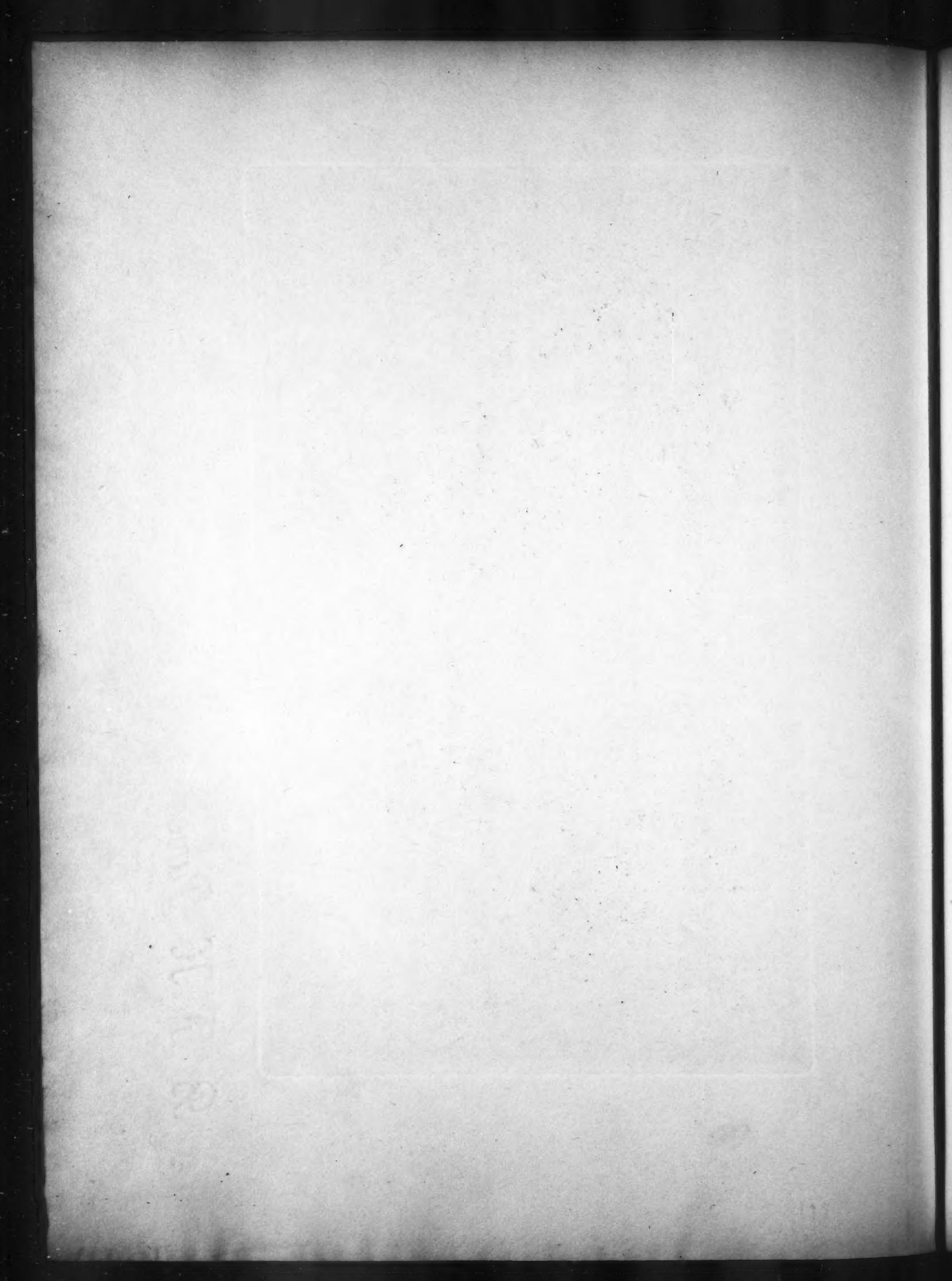
In 1515, Goetz von Berlichingen and John von Selbitz, jealous of the wealth of the burghers of the towns, and coveting those Indian spices in which there was now a considerable traffic in Germany, but which never came in their way, had carried off a company of merchants who were returning to Nuremberg with their escort from the fair at Leipzig. The Bürgermeister in indignation had denounced them to the Chamber of Justice. Not being able to besiege the town, well protected as it was by its walls, and well manned by its inhabitants, they had for two years prevented the Whitsuntide fair from taking place by their perpetual raids in the neighbourhood. It was in that same year 1515 that Franz von Sickingen first distinguished himself by his hostilities against the Imperial city of Worms, and soon attained the very highest rank among the German knights of the high road; but with this *rôle* he had the audacity to assume the manners and pretensions of a soldier fighting in the cause of justice, of a redresser of wrongs, aye, even of a statesman; this touch of the manners of the ancient chivalry gives him a character which is all his own.

Brought up as he was at home, at a time and in a land in which the renascence of letters gave a new importance to the education of the young, he received, although destined for the profession of arms and knighted at the age of fifteen, a certain tincture of Latin, an acquaintance with which language was now becoming fashionable, and of law, a knowledge of which was not without utility in that land of chicanery. In his youth he made the acquaintance, at his father's castle, of a preacher noted for the touches of humour which lightened his discourses, Geiler of Kaiserberg, a learned humanist and Hebraist; he also met John Reuchlin, perhaps too, John Faust, that doctor in the black art whom legend and poetry have made more famous. But he soon showed his preference for the career of arms. In 1509 we find him following the Emperor Maximilian in the war

of the league of Cambray against Venice, at the unsuccessful siege of Padua. On his return he married a certain Hedwig von Flersheim, who not only proved an excellent wife and mother—she had six children—but added to these virtues a practical knowledge of the art of fortifying castles, and even a capacity for assisting in their defence during her husband's absence; which last formed a not unimportant qualification for the wife of a knight in those days. Franz von Sickingen had perhaps grown a trifle weary of tranquil domestic happiness, when a chance arose for him to plunge into one of those private wars which were always regarded by the knights as a piece of good fortune.

In the Imperial city of Worms, under the eye of the Bishop, who was always ready to make use of an opportunity to regain something of his lost authority, a contest raged between the people, and the great burghers or patricians, for the municipal control of the city. Hence arose frequent banishments, conspiracies, and suits before the Imperial Chamber which favoured the great burghers, and sometimes there were merciless executions of those on the defeated side. After some troubles of this nature, in 1514, one of the Bishop's notaries, who had been banished from the city and punished with the confiscation of his goods, thought it useless to apply to the Emperor for protection, and took refuge in the castle of Franz von Sickingen. He gave the knight an interest in his cause by yielding to him certain letters of credit on the citizens, which he had from the City Council. The Count Palatine of the Rhine would have willingly seized this opportunity of taking possession of the Imperial city, and absorbing it in his territory. In short, Sickingen, like a good jurist and knight-errant, draws up a formal claim on behalf of his *protégé*, and addresses it to the Council of Worms, demanding that the money which had now become his should be restored. The Council submits the case to the Imperial Chamber, at that time sitting within the walls of the city. The latter orders the knight to mind his own business, and forbids him, on pain of banishment, to enter into hostilities against Worms; but Sickingen pays no heed. He gathers round him all the knights of his family, his dependents and friends, promising them booty and reward, and the exiled burghers, for their part, supply money and enlist soldiers, and the war is kindled.





Coming forth now, in right knightly fashion, at the head of a little army without even issuing a declaration of war, as it was the custom to do, Sickingen captures by an ambush on the Rhine, near Oppenheim, the vessel laden with burghers and merchandize which the city of Worms was accustomed to send every year to the fair at Frankfort. It was a splendid prize. The goods become the prey of the captors, and the prisoners are carried off to Sickingen's castles, only to emerge on payment of a heavy ransom. The Imperial Chamber (May, 1515) puts the knight, as guilty of high treason, under the ban of the Empire, and declares his nobility and his goods forfeit. Sickingen charges the Emperor's counsellors with being corrupted by his enemies, and strong, as he says, in his innocence and the justice of his cause, and perhaps in the favour of a prince, the Count Palatine of the Rhine, he sends his defiance to Worms; he then issues his declaration of war, addressing it to his friends the knights, and to all who wish for good pay, promising eight florins a month to horse-soldiers, four to footmen. Five hundred knights, among them the famous Goetz von Berlichingen, arrive in answer to the summons, and five thousand foot-soldiers armed with lances, and some engines of siege.

But the Imperial Worms, a large and rich city, was protected by substantial walls, furnished with deep trenches and with strong and lofty three-storied towers at short intervals, from which a shower of arrows, stones, bullets, and boiling pitch could be poured down on the assailants. The infantry, armed with mattocks and spades, endeavoured to cut off the water which supplied the town, to make entrenchments, and to open fire from bombards and serpentines on the walls and their defenders; but they were lacking in both appliances and skill. The cavalry were contented with devastating the vineyards, destroying the bridges, sacking the country-houses, and seizing the convoys of provisions, but they took care to avoid exciting the people to revolt through privation. Sickingen, in fury, gave the members of the Imperial Chamber to understand that they must hold their sittings elsewhere, for he would not answer for their security at Worms, and he forbade the inhabitants of Frankfort to send help or victuals to the besieged city, unless they wished to see their country houses sacked. The princes of the Rhenish Circle who were responsible for the maintenance of

the public peace, knew not what to do; luckily some troops from Hagenau and Upper Alsace arrived, and succeeded in making their way into the city. Sickingen raised the siege, deferring his vengeance to another time.

The Duchy of Lorraine was at this epoch still part of the Empire, and the anarchy then rife throughout Germany prevailed especially in this province, from the fact that it formed the frontier between two States often at war with one another. The Duke of Lorraine, Anton III, vassal of the Emperor though he was, figured none the less in the French army at the battle of Marignan, in 1515. No one knew which side was favoured by another noble of Lorraine, the celebrated Robert II de la Marck, Duke of Bouillon, Lord of Sedan, commonly called "the Wild Boar of Ardennes." He was between Germany and France, as it were between God and the Devil, to use the metaphor of his device : "*If God will not help me, the Devil will not abandon me.*" Franz von Sickingen had much the same relations of peace and war with the French princes and government as with those of his own country. He had sent his two sons to the court of Robert de la Marck, to be there trained up in the highest refinement of chivalric manners ; they had there become bound in the ties of friendship to the eldest son of the Wild Boar of Ardennes, Fleuranges, the adventurous companion in arms of the youthful Francis I, still better known by the charming memoirs which he has left us. Fleuranges held Sickingen, whom he had seen at his father's house, in high esteem. "He was," he tells us, "a most delightful companion, devoted to war, but yet a man of much culture, the finest linguist I think that I have ever met, and of such power and standing that there was not a noble prince or man-at-arms in Germany, but wished to do him a pleasure."

Sickingen's relations with Duke Anton III of Lorraine were less cordial. In fact our knight had only abandoned the siege of Worms in order to take arms against Duke Anton on behalf of a German Count of Geroldseck, and the burghers of the city of Metz, who were at variance with their Bishop. He had already taken some fortresses belonging to the Duke, and laid waste the Bishop's domains, when the adventurous Fleuranges and some French knights intervened, and mollified the Germans. On the Duke of Lorraine offering him a substantial war indemnity, Sickingen withdrew; it was all he had wanted. It was on this occasion that this Rhenish knight went over

to the service of the King of France. He was indeed a man whom it was wiser to have for a friend than an enemy. Francis I, who was already aiming at the Imperial crown, wished to attach him to his side. Fleuranges undertook to gain him; he led him to the King by way of Château-Thierry, and other fair towns of France up to Amboise. "The King gave him a notable reception, found him a well-mannered, well-spoken man, and bade him welcome, as did also all the ladies, so eagerly that he could not say a single word." Finally the King engaged him in his service for an annual wage of five hundred pounds and the promise of warring against all his enemies, except the Count de la March.

In the service of the King of France, our German knight threatened danger to the Empire. "My plan," he said to a confidential minister of the King, "is to strengthen your master's party among the German nobles. It is only from simple knights like myself that he can hope for really useful help; if he applies to the sovereign princes, above all to the Electors, he will infallibly be deceived. They will take his money willingly, but they will only do what seems good to them; instead of which, he will soon find out what use I can be to him." And yet he was but a mere knight, at the head, as a contemporary French writer says, "of a band of reckless adventurers, who had no other wages than those which they procured for themselves."

In 1517, having returned to his stronghold at Ebernburg, he continued to send out his hordes to harass the city of Worms, against which he still nourished his rancour. Extending his field of action in every direction, one day he surprised, near Mainz, seven waggons laden with merchandize, belonging to traders in Augsburg, Nuremberg, Kempten, and other towns, and sent them across the Palatinate to his retreat. On another occasion, being enraged against the town of Landau, where the assembly of the States of the Rhenish Circle had pronounced him an outlaw, he executed a raid on all the flocks in the territory, and sacked several churches. But the King of France, who was bent on creating a party in his own favour in Germany, or at any rate on fomenting strife there, expected greater things from this knight-adventurer.

In Southern Germany too, there was a prince who had a crow to pluck

with the Emperor. This was Ulrich, commonly called the "Duke and Executioner of Würtemberg," a bitter enemy to the great and rich cities of the Swabian league, which he molested in their commerce; he was at this time also engaged in a quarrel with the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria for the ill-treatment which he inflicted on his wife Sabina, niece of the former and daughter of the latter. He had moreover drawn down on himself threatening sentences from the Imperial Chamber. Francis I wished to combine all these elements of disorder against the Emperor. "I shall not abandon," he said to an envoy from Würtemberg, "either Duke Ulrich or Sickingen in their struggle against the Emperor. I shall induce the Duke of Guelders, the Count de la Marck, and other allies of mine to render important assistance to Sickingen and his friends; so that for some time to come the Emperor will have his hands full."

Here was food for reflection for Maximilian, who was then desirous of having his grandson, Charles of Austria, elected to the Empire. We are told that to go from one end of the Empire to the other, Maximilian was obliged to take an extremely circuitous route, so as to avoid the roads infested by bands of brigands. At a Diet held at Mainz, in June, 1517, he demanded a levy of one man for every fifty hearths to maintain peace or to defend the frontiers. But the States replied that they trusted in God, and were satisfied with nominating a commission, which produced fine words with no practical result. In despair, Maximilian decided to bring about a reconciliation between Sickingen and the city of Worms, and to take this redoubtable freebooter into his service, so as to detach him from Francis I, and to send him against the Duke of Würtemberg, who was then under the ban of the Empire for his hostilities against the cities of the Swabian league, from which he had captured the town of Reutlingen.

Some princes who were then assembled at Mainz acted as mediators between the Emperor and the knight. Maximilian, himself the embodiment of chivalry in many respects, had a decided liking for Sickingen. He was attached to his good cities, but he found them exacting, and declared that "for a bag of pepper the merchants would put the whole Empire in a commotion." Laying his hand on his heart, the Emperor gave his assurance that Sickingen might without fear come to have an interview with him.

The knight at once presented himself boldly at Innspruck at the Easter festivities of the year 1517. It was believed that the ministers of the Emperor would have him arrested. The most eminent among them, Nicholas Ziegler, by way of bidding him welcome, sent Sickingen a keg of wine, which the knight, despite the suspicions of his friends, drained with his companions. The Emperor received him affably, gave him his hand to kiss, and dismissed him from the audience arm-in-arm with his ministers. The one thing especially desired of him was that he should quit the service of the King of France for that of the Emperor. Sickingen consented to this with the less reluctance, because he loved to call himself a good German, and also because he found Francis I a bad paymaster. The Emperor released him from the Imperial ban, promised him a monthly salary of 300 ducats, and undertook to pay 40,000 florins for him to the city of Worms, to compensate for the depredations he had committed in its territory—which sum the good city never saw. To commemorate this reconciliation, Sickingen had a gold medal struck. On one side it bore the figure of the Emperor, with the inscription : “Honour God, love the commonwealth, and protect the right;” on the other, Sickingen at the feet of the Emperor, with a very different device, viz : “If thou dost not prefer Mercury to Mars, thou wilt always be happy and victorious.” After he had, in accordance with this last principle, settled certain small accounts with the city of Metz, which secured immunity from ravages by the payment of twenty-five thousand florins, and with the Landgrave of Hesse, who saved his town of Darmstadt from an assault by paying thirty-five thousand, Sickingen was preparing to lead his troops against the Duke of Würtemberg, when Maximilian died on the 12th of January, 1519.

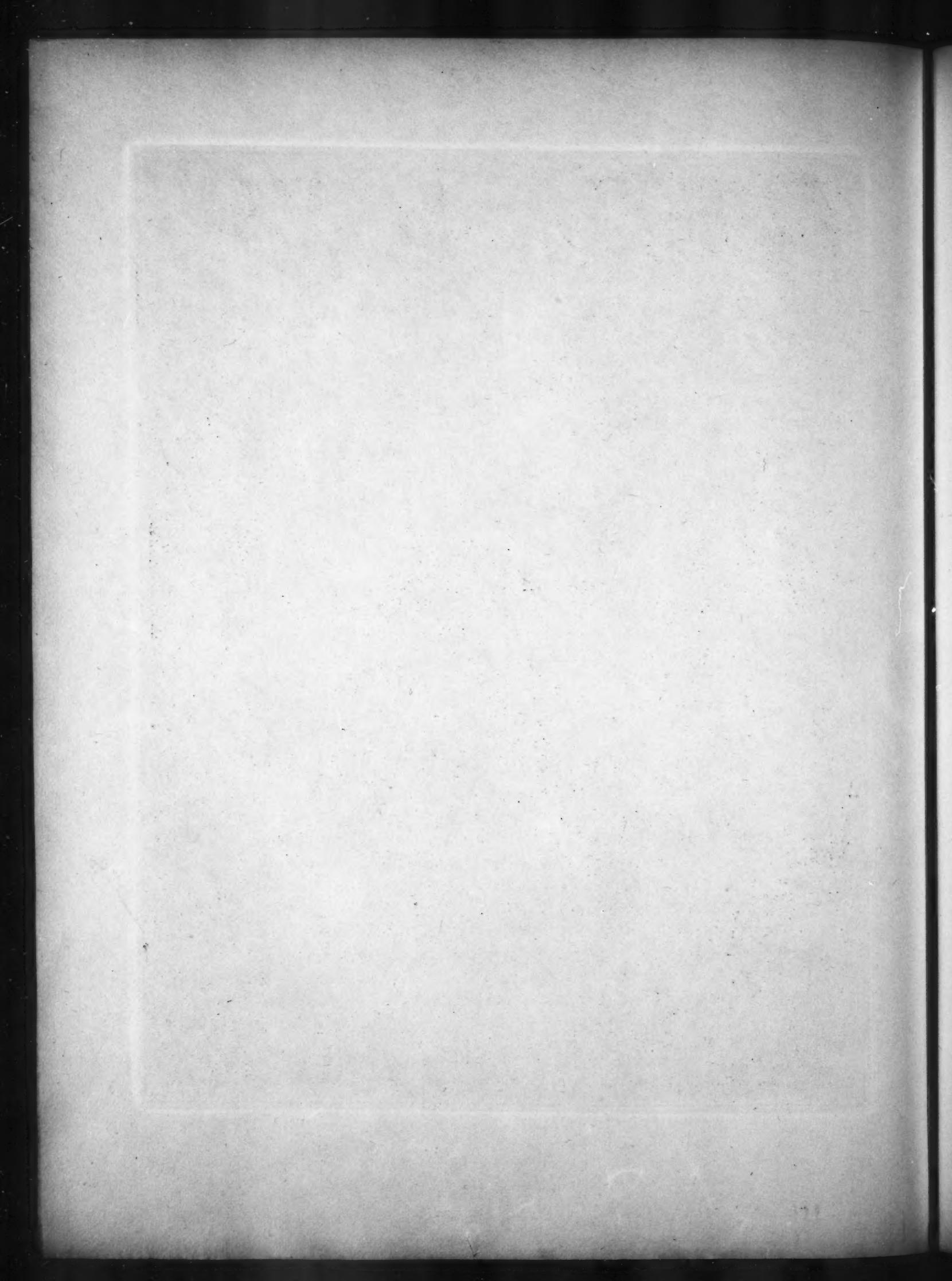
Whilst the seven great Electors of Germany were bargaining for their votes with the two candidates for the Imperial crown—Francis I and Charles of Austria—Sickingen, simple knight though he was, was, no less than the members of the Electoral College, the object of overtures for corruption on the part of the two illustrious rivals. If the contest between them was to resolve itself from a question of finance to one of arms, it would be well for either of them to have on his side a daring captain with a numerous band of soldiers at his disposal. Sickingen was therefore, as a

contemporary tells us, "sought out by both parties, as a man powerful both to help and to harm." Francis I despatched agent after agent to his old hireling to offer him all sorts of advantages; he sent him the most emphatic assurance, "that there was not a man among his subjects or his friends for whom he had a warmer regard, whom he held in higher esteem, or in whom he placed more confidence." But, notwithstanding all, Sickingen shared the then general opinion that a German prince ought to be at the head of Germany, and Charles of Austria's aunt, a most adroit negotiator, who had her own private grudge against the Court of France, her hopes of marriage with Charles VIII having been disappointed, persuaded Sickingen —by the aid of three thousand florins—to continue the war against the Duke of Würtemberg, who was the partisan of Francis I, and afterwards to advance with his troops on the town of Frankfort, where the election was to take place. Sickingen carried the town of Stuttgart, the capital of Würtemberg, by storm, and marched with twenty-four thousand men to surround Frankfort, "whereat much dismay was caused among those who wished well for the King of France, and much joy among those who wished well for the Catholic King," and thus it came about that in spite of the presence of some French free companies and a strong force of artillery on the German frontier, Charles V was elected at Frankfort, under the protection of Franz von Sickingen's lances.

Nothing could have marked the knight more plainly as destined henceforth to play a part on the side of the new Emperor, in the rivalry which sprang into being from that moment between Charles V and the King of France. To replace Sickingen, Francis I had succeeded in gaining over, to maintain his cause on the Franco-German frontier, Count Robert de la Marck, who was not less valuable as an ally than Sickingen. This occasioned the outbreak of a petty war on the frontiers between the two rivals, which began almost immediately after the election.

On his return from Romorantin, where he had been won over by the King, the Wild Boar of Ardennes sent his defiance to the Emperor, who was then at Worms, and threw himself into Luxemburg at the head of the little army which he maintained at his own cost. In answer to this attack, the Emperor sends the Duke of Nassau and Franz von Sickingen





into Ardennes. These last are not contented with occupying and pillaging all the territory ruled over by Robert de la Marck; they cross the frontier, shew themselves several times on French territory, and take Mouzon by surprise. The King of France fears an instant for Mézières, a place of great importance, but most difficult to defend, and while he collects a powerful army of eighteen thousand men with sixty new pieces of artillery, under the command of the Constable de Bourbon, he sends the flower among his followers, the knight without fear and without reproach, "the man he trusted most in all his kingdom," to defend the place; thus came into one another's presence, under the walls of Mézières, two types, widely divergent from each other, of the disorderly knighthood of Germany, and the chivalry of France, so finely disciplined under her King—Franz von Sickingen, and the Chevalier Bayard.

For the German knight, we know what he was, a *condottiere* who had already changed camps twice, always going over to the side which offered most; while on the other hand Fleuranges tells us of our noble knight that "he would not have taken a hundred thousand crowns for this command, for his sole desire was to serve his master, and to acquit himself with honour." In short, Bayard, accompanied by a few nobles who volunteered their services, rapidly puts the place in repair; the Duke of Nassau and Sickingen, coming up at the head of a considerable force, despatch a herald, to offer him "such favourable terms that he must perforce be satisfied."

"My friend herald," replies Bayard, "you will return to those who sent you, and tell them that the King my master had many men more capable than myself to defend this town, which bars your way; but since he has done me the honour to entrust the charge to me, I hope, with the help of Our Lord, to hold out so long that your masters will be much more wearied of maintaining the siege than I of being besieged; I am no child to be frightened with words."

And in fact, Bayard is fortunate enough to succeed, by a skilful stratagem, in dividing his enemies, thus giving Francis I time to come up in force with his army, so that he has the satisfaction of seeing the besiegers break up their camp; and the King himself enters Mézières and rewards

his loyal servant by admitting him into his own order of knighthood.

* *

"The sword grows rusty which stays in the scabbard," says a German proverb. Sickingen only returned to his castle of Ebernburg to engage in an intestine quarrel of much graver import, which was stirring the German nation to its depths. Whilst the Duke of Nassau and the freebooter Sickingen were fighting on the frontiers, the new Emperor had, at the Diet of Worms, condemned and put under the ban of the Empire, the reformer Luther, who after preaching for four years against the Papacy and the established Church, was beginning to draw away a portion of Germany from her spiritual allegiance to the Pope. A knight who had taken such liberties with the government and with the political institutions of his country as our hero had done, could not have many scruples with regard to the established religious authorities, although quite recently, after the death of his wife, he had thought of fulfilling the vow which she had made of founding a convent, doubtless in expiation for the sins that her husband had committed against the Empire. But he was thrown decisively into this new path by a writer of pamphlets, himself too a man of knightly race, a bold, adventurous, and turbulent spirit, as was the class to which he belonged.

Ulrich von Hutten was born in 1488, at the castle of Steckelberg, on the borders of Franconia and Hesse, not far from Frankfort, which he afterwards called "the meeting-place of all nations and the emporium of the merchandize of the world." Being a younger son, and of a delicate constitution, he was sent at an early age to the abbey of Fulda, with the view of entering the Church. But that was an epoch when not only the Universities, but the convents themselves were disturbed by the disputes between the humanists of the Renaissance and the scholasticists of the old school. Like a true knight's son, Ulrich took the side of the literary reformers, and to escape being forced into the ranks of the clergy, he fled from the convent at the age of sixteen. "Whilst my joyous and robust youth throve," he says, "under the influence of new studies, like the year under the breath of spring, I was all impatience to see the world; nothing suited me better

than to live everywhere—everywhere was my country, my home, my land."

From that time we find him now studying in all the German universities, now fighting in Italy at Padua, at Bologna; at one moment a poet and master of arts, at the next a freebooter; here attending the lectures of masters, there following some renowned captain, gifted above all with a fertile energy of mind, often at the point of starvation, but always ready for battle, a humanist in Germany, a Ghibelline in Italy, firing off more epigrams than he slew foes in Maximilian's service in his coat of mail. In his capacity as a Ghibelline poet in Italy, he had written some Latin verses insulting King Louis XII, "the incontinent and haughty" French, the Venetian Republic, "whose lion was in his eyes a mere frog dressed in a lion's skin, and decked out with eagles' wings," and finally Pope Julius II, "that mail-clad successor of Jesus Christ, with sword in hand, with grizzled hair and beard, who was driving on the Christian Commonwealth to tear her entrails with her own hands." For him Italy, once noble, was now merely fickle.

Mobilis Italia est, nobilis ante fuit.

In Germany his brows were crowned with the wreath of the poet laureate by the Emperor Maximilian, and shortly afterwards he stayed at the Court of the powerful Archbishop-Elector of Mainz, Albert of Brandenburg, whose livery he wore as courtier; he had won the good graces of his protectors by writing a complete poem in Latin in honour of the mighty German Emperors of the past, the Ottos and Barbarossas, those veritable chieftains of the Christian Europe of their days, the rivals, and for a long time the successful opponents, of the illustrious Popes of the Middle Ages, whose hostility ended in the humiliation and defeat of the Empire. But polemics were more to his taste than panegyrics, and he soon put both sword and pen—especially the latter—at the service of any and every cause. One day he wrote some violent and abusive letters in defence of the humanist Reuchlin against the Dominicans of Cologne, whom he treated as Obscurantists. "O age! O letters!" he exclaimed in his youthful enthusiasm, "learning and genius flourish—it is a joy to live!"

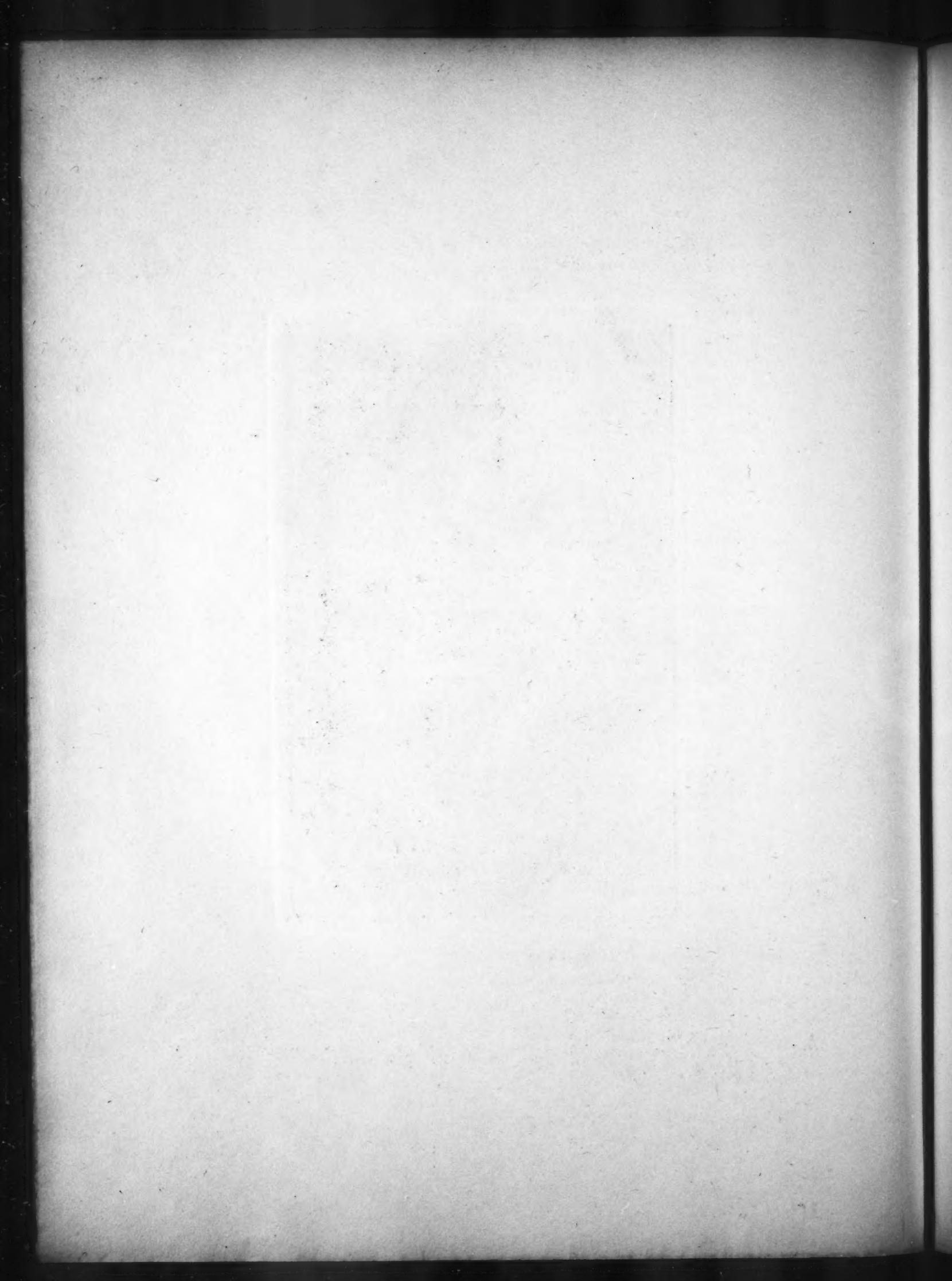
There was not a quarrel in which he did not take an active part with either sword or pen. At the Diet of Augsburg, in 1518, to which a legate

had come from Lyons to propose a crusade to the aged Maximilian, he wrote a pamphlet against the tithe demanded for this purpose, and riddled the purple-robed envoy of Rome with his epigrams. Such an intellect as his was plainly destined to play an active part in the religious and national quarrel into which Doctor Martin Luther was drawing Germany; in fact, after going on a mission to the Court of France at the instance of the Archbishop of Mainz, to negotiate the sale of his vote to Francis I, against whom he afterwards wrote a virulent letter, he left the profession of courtier, preserving no trace of it henceforth save in his dress. His desire is no longer to be anything in any official world, he will be nobody, *Nemo*, as he calls himself in one of his Latin poems; and free from every chain, he takes up once more the sword and the pen of adventure. After writing a pamphlet entitled *Phalaris or the Tyrant*, against the Duke of Würtemberg, he enters with Sickingen within the walls of Stuttgart, where he protects the aged Reuchlin against the victorious soldiery, leads him to the banks of the Rhine, and compels his enemies, the Dominicans of Cologne, to pay him an indemnity. "Hutten in arms!" exclaims Erasmus; "it is indeed for strife that thou wast born!" But he puts more hope in his pen, and at the end of the year 1519, he retires, armed with his printing-press, to his paternal home at Steckelberg, of which he had recovered possession, and from thence he sends forth, as he says himself, "the most free and the most violent pasquinades that have ever been written against Rome and against the Church."

Having resolved to defend his friends, to labour—as he believed, at least—for the emancipation of Germany, he had not wished at first to associate his new work with the campaign undertaken by Luther. He intended to keep on good terms with Archbishop Albert of Mainz, and, being in truth but little interested in theological theses, he had said: "I understand that some monks are disputing about indulgences; courage, my brethren, make use of both sides!" But by degrees, as the monk of Wittemberg continues to grow in reputation, he sends an assurance of his sympathy to the reformer by Melanchthon, the latter's disciple, and when finally Luther is condemned at Rome, he writes to him: "I am yours;" and when he burns the Papal bull, "Luther, thou art great indeed!"







At length, having addressed a farewell to his mother, which might well have drawn tears from her eyes, he says : "The die is cast—*jacta est alea*"—and in his pasquil on the conduct of the Popes against the German Emperors, he exclaims : "Hitherto I have written all this in Latin, so that not every one should understand; but now I proclaim it to the German people. Listen, princes, knights, to my new speech. Truth has just been born, falsehood has been laid bare; I am come to tell you, for ages you have been deceived, and the teaching of God has been overlaid with superstition. No, the clergy ought not to place worldly honours and the care of temporal affairs before the sacred Word of God; for the things which concern the body are not their business."

Then he relates how the Popes, by virtue of a pretended grant from Constantine, have taken possession of Rome, and of the States of the Church; how the German sovereigns, till then the mightiest rulers upon earth, have gone to kiss the feet of a Roman priest, and to receive from him, as vassals, the Imperial crown, swearing to abandon Rome and Italy.

And who is he, this successor of the poor fisherman, Peter? Girt with a triple crown, laden with purple and gold, girt with the two swords, he holds the mystic keys, he farms out to the bishops and abbots of Germany temporal and spiritual rights, so that they thus buy back the rights of their predecessors, to say nothing of his selling us the remission of our sins, while He who poured out his blood that all might drink of the cup of grief, is despised as a layman and a peasant. "Hold, companions, the game has lasted now too long. You have carried off enough money from Germany; you have corrupted her morals enough; no, no, the true Church is not at Rome, which every year raises the price we must pay for the Kingdom of Heaven. The Church is the assembled body of all Christians. No, I tell you, you who sell what Christ has given, you are not the Church. In vain do you increase the number of your priests; reform yourselves, instead of multiplying. Practise what you preach, instead of being like those guide-posts which point out a way along which they never move themselves."

We see how the humanist of former days throws himself into the current of reform whose course was determined some years before by the famous

Martin Luther. But it is easy to discern how, in attacking the religious and political power which Rome had assumed and by which she claimed to rule the minds, the conscience, and the interests of all men, his point of view is essentially political—very different from that of the great rebel of Wittemberg. This is shown most clearly in a curious passage from a pamphlet of Hutten's, entitled the *Roman Triad*. It ends with the conclusion that the centre of Christianity is less in Italy or at Rome than in any other city, above all in a German city. "It cannot be, in fact," he argues, "in consideration of the place, that God chooses the nation, but it is in consideration of the nation that He chooses the place where He will establish His justice," and since there is no doubt that the German nation is the most pure of all, "the city of Mainz or that of Cologne may just as well be, if she be worthy, the chosen city of God." There is no need, according to him, to take up arms and march to be decimated in Italy, in order to effect this revolution. Let all Germany make up its mind—Emperors, princes, and cities—to do without Rome, to free the ecclesiastical elections from the Pontifical yoke, and crown the Emperor in a German city to reform the Church. It was scarcely to have been expected that so light a head as Hutten's would propose a revolution which aimed at nothing less than detaching Germany from the Catholic Unity by founding an independent Church, and transforming the old Holy Empire, relieved from the coronation at Rome, into an Empire entirely German, national, and secular.

According to Ulrich von Hutten, men had but to dare, and this foreign tyranny would be at an end, and he believed his countrymen disposed to be as bold in action as he was himself in words. "Hear me, Charles," were his concluding words to the Emperor, "hear me favourably. It is for thine honour, it is for the welfare of the country that I have spoken, not to awaken tumult in the Empire. It is for thee to be our leader, to begin, and to achieve this task. I am ready by day and night to serve thee with speech and sword; take courage, I will bring many brave knights to help thee; it is time now, unfold the wings of thy eagles. Forward! we have good store of arms and horses; we have swordsmen and swords enough, we have the right on our side, our cause is good."

And do thou, Lord, have pity on thy doctrine; let not the truth be oppressed. Forward, it is God's will. Let who can remain still at home after hearing this cry. I have dared it, that is my rhyme. (*Ich hab's gewagt, das ist mein Reim*.)"

That was the first cry of religious and civil war which resounded throughout Germany. It is true that the violence of this new Saturninus, to whom even the great already lent an ear, frightened even the enemies of Rome. Still there was something deceptive and plausible in this Ghibelline appeal for the deliverance of Germany from Roman imposts, and of the Empire from the Papal supremacy, from a foreign suzerainty. After the Emperor, the lay princes, jealous of the land-holding clergy, and the ecclesiastical princes, who sometimes chafed under the oppression of Rome, could find something in it for their advantage. So the headlong Ulrich von Hutten pushed on with redoubled zeal. Excommunicated like Luther, he braves the thunderbolts of Leo X in a pasquil entitled *Bullicide* (the slayer of bulls). "Lutheran," he says, "I am not, but even more than Luther I am the sworn foe of bulls." On learning that the new Emperor, the young Charles V, was setting out from Brussels for Worms to hold his first Diet, he hastened to meet him, and to endeavour to convert him to his ideas. His illusion did not last long. Menaced by those who were escorting the Emperor, instead of being received by him, he learnt on his return to the banks of the Rhine that the Pope, invoking the aid of the secular arm, had already written to several princes, directing them to seize his person and send him to Rome. It was then, that, repulsed on all sides, threatened with proscription, he conceived the plan of identifying his cause with that of Germany, and took refuge with the Knight of Sickingen in the Castle of Ebernburg, to precipitate the revolution by violence, with the forces of the princes, or failing them, with those of the knights.

* * *

The castle of the knight who aspired to the office of redresser of grievances had become the recognized place of refuge for all the would-be reformers of the country, who thus eluded the pursuit of the established

authorities. Behind its strong walls and in the midst of its warriors was an assembly of rebellious theologians who had preceded or followed Martin Luther in his secession : Martin Bissner, a Dominican who had been expelled from Strassburg, Capito, who had been forced, like Hutten, to leave the Elector of Mainz after a vain attempt to bring him round to the new doctrine, Ecolampadius, "a theologian with good teeth to fight the toothless theologasters," who had been the first to read the mass in German; besides these, there were some learned knights, Heinrich von Dalberg, formerly councillor of the Elector of Mainz, and Hartmuth von Kronenberg, a sort of inspired prophet. In this retreat, amid the clanging of swords and the draining of beakers, were heard discussions on grace and indulgences, and exegetical notes were compared on passages of Scripture. Welcomed with enthusiasm to this castle, which he soon named the Asylum of Justice (*Herberge der Gerechtigkeit*), Hutten came to pour oil in floods on the fire. He would gladly have drawn thither the famous Erasmus, Reuchlin the Hebraist, who was still at strife with the Dominicans of Cologne, and even him whose renown was beginning to eclipse all others; but the prudent Erasmus already expressed his fear lest a conflagration might be kindled "which would devour the whole Church;" Reuchlin took good care not to entrust his person to the protection of those whom he called the "flails of God," and Martin Luther, though he exchanged frequent letters with them, and shared many of their ideas, sent the mild Melanchthon to gain a closer view of this armed Propaganda, and after hearing his report ceased by degrees to correspond with these "Centaurs."

Even when the Emperor Charles, who was on his way to the Diet of Worms, sent his confessor Glapio to Ebernburg with instructions to bring Luther thither, in the hopes of extracting some compromise from him, the reformer preferred to present himself at Worms.

While all Germany now fixes its attention on the drama which is being played in that city, the castle of Ebernburg, which is not far away, does not fail to be informed of all that takes place there. Knights urged on by the theologians prowl about the city or even penetrate into it, swearing that they will not suffer a hair of Luther's head to fall. When they learn that the legates of the Pope refuse to enter into discussion with

Luther, but demand a simple recantation, "I see clearly," cries Hutten, "that what we want here are armour and swords, arrows and bombards, since they will not listen to reason and speech." And when the reformer is condemned and put under the ban of the Empire, "What!" cries he again, "has nothing warned them, not the temper of the age, this breath of liberty, this weariness of the present, this general desire for a new state of things? Go on then to meet the fate which awaits you." And with a handful of determined knights, he goes into ambush and scours the roads in the neighbourhood of Worms, bent on capturing the two legates, so as at least to have hostages in his hands.

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Such was the condition of affairs at Ebernburg and in the district between the Rhine and the Moselle, when Franz von Sickingen returned from his unsuccessful expedition against the town of Mézières, to his feudal mansion, now ennobled by Hutten with the name of the Asylum of Justice. He returned dissatisfied with himself for his failure, and with Charles because he had not been regular in sending the pay for his troops. He disbanded the latter, who were even less satisfied than himself, and captain and soldiers asked themselves what they were going to do next. Were not he and his companions the knights just the very instruments needed for the armed reformation which was meditated in Ebernburg by the proscribed theologians of the Rhenish provinces?

In the course of those frequent revolutions which Germany and the Germanic Empire had undergone during the Middle Ages, the class of the knights and small nobles had continually lost more and more of their liberty and power. Protected in former days by the Emperor, who often rested on their support, they had remained, since the decay of the Imperial power, exposed without defence to the encroachments of the great feudal princes. Hidden away in their little castles, in the midst of the vast domains of the lay and ecclesiastical princes, they felt themselves gradually becoming absorbed in these great independent states, which were completed and rounded off at their expense. Falling into decay and poverty just at the time when luxury was advancing in Ger-

many, this democracy of nobles never ceased to cherish an especial bitterness against the great prelates; for the latter could not defend their acts of aggression by basing them on the noble privilege of arms, yet none the less did they use every means to increase their wealth and their domains, whether by lending at interest or enforcing the claims of minors received into their orders. The new Emperor had just dealt one more severe blow at the knights at the Diet of Worms by definitely establishing a Council of Regency, composed of the most powerful princes, to govern in his absence, and by reviving the Imperial Chamber, composed of jurists, to take strong action against the disturbers of the public peace. The petty nobles, therefore, looked out with rage from their embattled towers to see the flood of the great principalities of Germany rise to their moats full of stagnant water, to their loophole-pierced walls. With despair did they count the castles that had been razed to the ground. They seized every opportunity for protesting against the jurists of the Imperial Chamber, before whom, they said, the princes, lay or ecclesiastical, who could pay, always secured the verdict against them. Would not they be the gainers by supporting a religious movement which threatened the great prelates with the secularization of their immense possessions in Germany? Might they not hope, by putting themselves at the service of this movement and accelerating the revolution by some bold stroke, to pick up for themselves some stray morsels from the wreck of the Church? For some time past, therefore, both on the banks of the Rhine and in the Palatinate, there had been a recrudescence of agitation and daring. The roads were no longer safe for traders or for monks. Some of these armed brigands struck off the right hands of those from whom they could extract no ransom. "We know not what ails the knights," said a magistrate of Frankfort; "they are in a terrible rage." Nothing was wanting for the revolution save a watchword and a leader, and Ulrich von Hutten was there to supply the former, Franz von Sickingen the latter.

Every evening, at the castle of Ebernburg, Hutten read the reformer's books aloud to Sickingen, whose secretary he had become, making comments as he went on; he also read to him his own fiery pamphlets, which he disseminated sometimes in the form of exhortations and com-

plaints, sometimes in that of dialogues, amongst the nobles, the burghers, and even amongst the peasants, who suffered most of all under the existing state of things, and seemed to him destined to become the liberators of their country. In them he accused the Emperor repeatedly of having betrayed the cause of truth and of Germany, and asserted that after his departure the council of princes assembled at Nuremberg took no care for the common weal, and did not act with sufficient energy against the Papal power and the great prelates of Germany.

In his broadsides, which found their way everywhere, Germany was represented as "the Judah of modern Europe, thanks to the printing-press which belongs to it; the time has come; its children, Luther and Hutten, are about to lead the world into the paths of the future; the Emperor should take these two, with Sickingen, for his counsellors. Germany will then break off from Rome, the bishops will cease to be electors or princes, the monks will be suppressed, or at any rate, their numbers will be diminished, public appointments will no longer be given to Johanns or Conrads, scribes of ignoble birth, but to good knights," and if the Emperor does not make up his mind to assume the initiative in this revolution, Sickingen will undertake the task; so at least the pamphleteer makes Sickingen himself say in one of his pamphlets—Sickingen now making great progress in the new doctrine.

In fact, in answer to one of his interlocutors who asks him if he is ambitious of playing in Germany, in Luther's favour, the part which John Ziska played in Bohemia after the death of John Huss, and whether he will re-enact that tragedy so full of crime and impiety, Sickingen says : "Acts of crime and impiety they are to those who do not know the whole story. Is it a crime to have delivered Bohemia from the tyranny of Rome or of the great clergy, to have transferred the wealth of bishops or monks to the State? Sickingen will not refuse to play the part of John Ziska. He would not have undertaken it if the Emperor had understood the true interests of Germany and of religion. But since the Emperor has not willed it, Sickingen will do—not that which pleases Charles V now, but that which will really be of service to him hereafter. He will disobey him, at the risk of his displeasure, rather than do

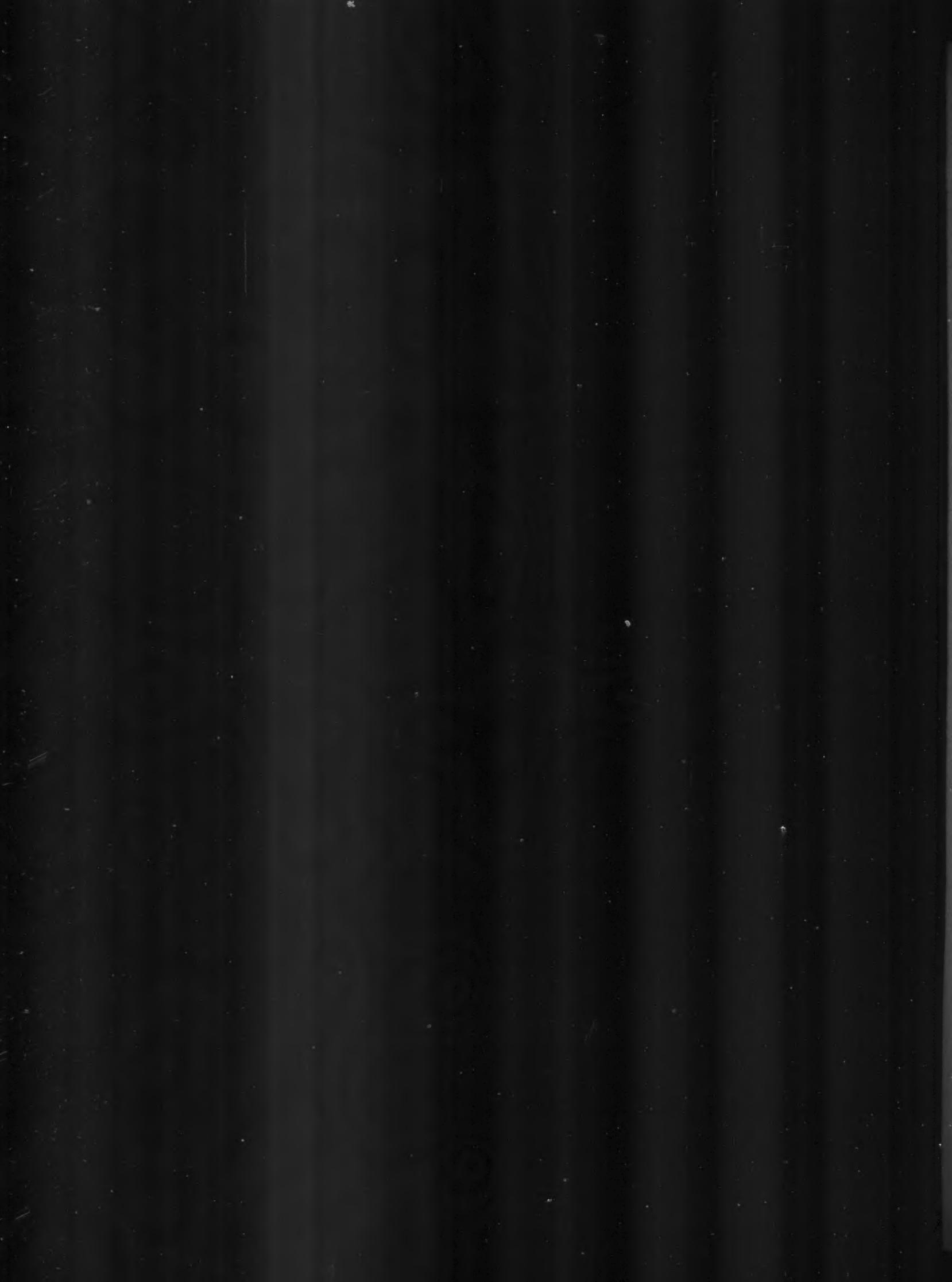
him an injury. Disobedience is often the highest obedience. When the Emperor, riper in years, has got rid of his evil counsellors and can judge for himself, he will do him justice. Moreover, when truth is at stake, are we not bound to obey the will of God rather than that of men?"

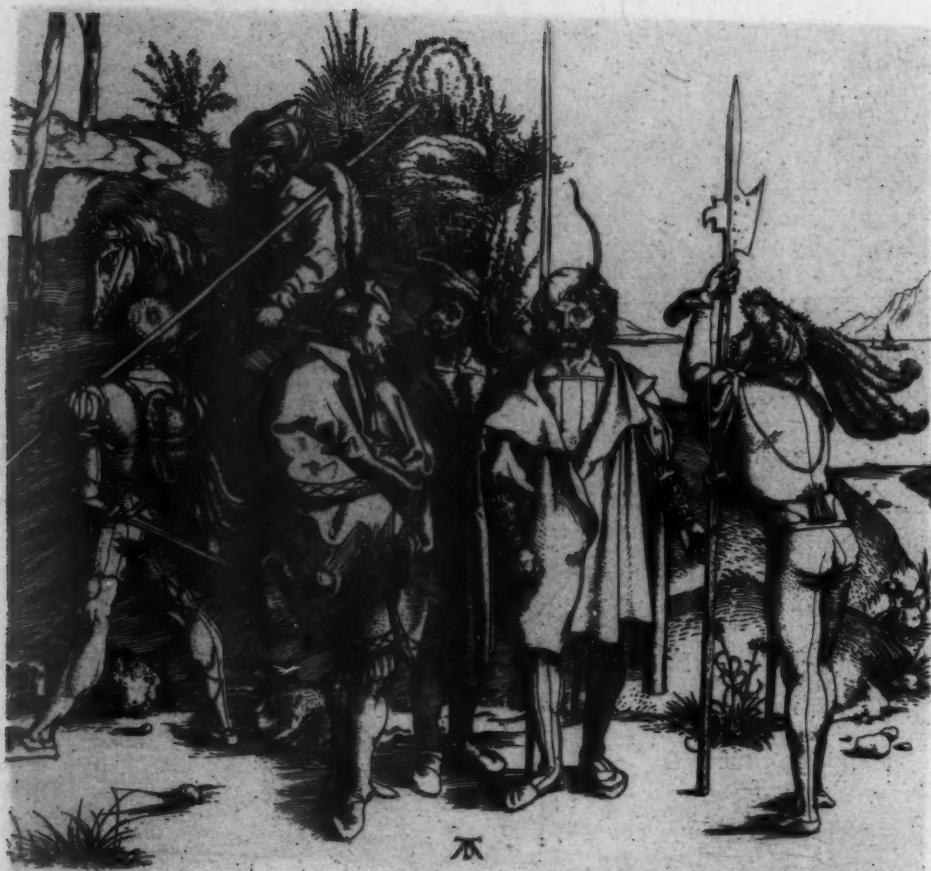
We see that Ulrich von Hutten by his plausible reasoning had prepared the ground for his revolt.

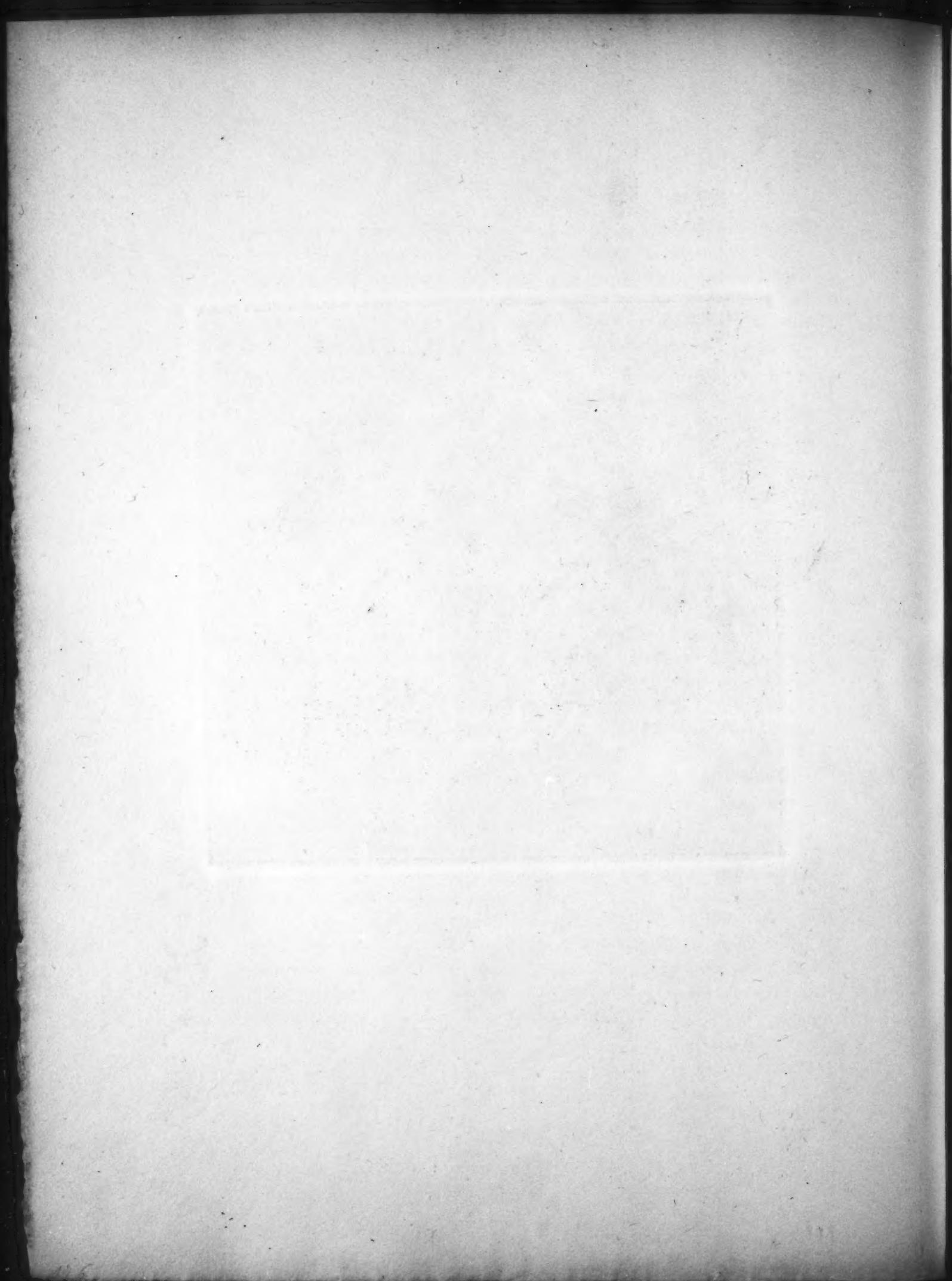
Sickingen commenced operations in 1522 by convoking at Landau, for the month of August, an assembly of the knights from the banks of the Rhine, and from Franconia, to which he had several times appealed under different circumstances. He had in no way concealed his aim from them.

It was against the ecclesiastical Elector of Treves, Richard von Grafenklau, his powerful neighbour, that he wished to direct the forces of the knights at his disposal. This man had always been his enemy; his domains were considerable, and were the town of Treves once taken, they would be at his discretion; Sickingen would then assume the title and power of Elector. This would be the first secularization, soon to be followed by others, to begin the revolution. But there would not, perhaps, be knights enough to carry the town of Treves and occupy the whole of the Electorate. But Ulrich von Hutten is at no loss. He will supply more soldiers, more partisans; he makes the attempt at least in two new works, one addressed to the burghers, the other to the German peasantry.

In the first, entitled *The Brigands*, a dialogue takes place between Franz von Sickingen and a burgher. The knight claims for the knightly order their old right of making war, an appanage of nobility, small as well as great. "It is their honourable privilege to succour the unhappy, to protect the innocent, to deliver the oppressed." "Is it then so noble," asks the trader, "to infest the high roads, to interrupt commerce, to plunder traders?" Sickingen must fain admit that a certain number of the knights have been guilty of crimes, and that it would be a good thing to hang them. But in his view there are other brigands in Germany much more dangerous than these. First of all, "there are the traders themselves, who, getting the start of the rest on the new road to India, monopolize the sale of these new commodities, pepper, ginger, cinnamon,







and sell these dangerous novelties at exorbitant prices, a genuine brigandage of fraud and usury, which depraves the soul and corrupts the morals. Wiser far were the old Germans, who by closing their frontiers against the Roman merchants had nipped in the bud the love of gain, father of fraud and luxury, the principle of decay."

The second class of brigands was that of the scribes and jurists, "men in red caps, whose business it is to draw up the rescripts of the princes, to distort the right by the help of commentaries, to decide lawsuits by falsehood and by selling their signatures, as though it were not far better to seek justice in arms, as of old, and to decide causes by combat."

But the brigandage most to be feared is that of hypocrisy and superstition, "which is carried on under all pretexts, and in all degrees in the Church. The most formidable brigands are the archbishops and bishops, canons and abbots, who heap up titles, and above all, possessions, monopolize vast domains, and have the sole control over the administration of justice; these priests who plunder families at the bed of the sick, and sell pardons at the tribunal of the confessional, and these begging monks, sordid and rapacious, whom one meets on all the roads and at all the crossways, once humble and suave, but arrogant and tyrannical in their demands now that their holy mendicity has come into power." The knights of the open country and traders of the towns finally agree to sacrifice the clergy, who are a thorn in their side.

In another dialogue from the pen of Hutten, Sickingen seeks to interest in his projected revolution the miserable peasants, down-trodden by all other classes, by talking to his interlocutor of communion in both kinds, of the mass in the vulgar tongue, of the heavy burden of the tithes and the grievous inflictions of fasts and abstinence; but he takes great precautions, as though he feared to touch this powerful and terrible lever, which, if once set in motion, might overturn the whole fabric of society; and when the peasant is worked up to anger against the splendour of the churches, against the gold and silver lavished on the shrines of the saints, against the precious vessels, statues, and paintings, and with a fury that already savours of the iconoclast and the desecrator, utters a fierce vow to begin at once the work of pitchfork and mattock, Sickingen

restrains the ardour of his new-found ally, whose revolt bids fair to be much more terrible than that of the knights.

Be all that as it might, however, at the beginning of April, 1522, a large body of knights, amongst them a Count von Zollern, a Furstenberg, a Rosenberg, and many others, had assembled at Landau. They chose Franz von Sickingen as their leader, and promised to bring together five thousand horsemen and ten thousand foot under the banner, on which were strangely blazoned the arms of Germany and Burgundy. Representatives of more distant parts were soon expected, a Munkartz from Brunswick, a Renneberg from the County of Juliers. The Archbishop of Mainz, who was suspected of leanings towards reform, was reported to have promised subsidies from enmity to his colleague of Treves, and he left his knights free to march under the orders of Sickingen. It was hoped that this ecclesiastical prince would set the example of secularizing his Electorate. Meanwhile, on the 22nd of August, Sickingen sent his defiance to Archbishop Richard von Graffenklau, and entered his Electorate at the head of a numerous band of soldiers who bore these words engraved on their sword hilts as a watchword : "Lord, thy will be done." The capture of the small town of St. Vadel raised the hopes of the insurgent knights, and struck terror into the hearts of their opponents. The deputy of the Duke of Saxony wrote to his master that no more dangerous rising against the princes had occurred for many centuries, and things were taking such a turn that it would soon be impossible to say who was Emperor or King, prince or peer. Sickingen declared at the outset that he would make himself Elector, when he appeared before the walls of Treves on the 8th September. Some said that he meant to make himself King on the banks of the Rhine, and Spalatin, a counsellor of State, the protector of Luther at Wittemberg, wrote : "If I am not much mistaken, this leader of civil war means to be Cæsar." This wild enterprise, however, ended in disastrous failure.

As early as the 1st of September the Imperial Council of Regency had summoned the most powerful among the princes and the towns of the Circles of the Rhine to take up arms against Sickingen. An Imperial herald came to him on the 9th September, beneath the walls of Treves, and

ordered him to raise the siege, on pain of being put under the ban of the Empire, and to pay two thousand marks of silver.

"Aha! this is the old music," said Sickingen to his followers, "but they find no one to dance to it now." And he bade the herald take his answer to the Imperial Council of princes, "that he was a more loyal subject than they, and that he would establish a better right than theirs in Germany. When Sickingen was Elector of Treves and Richard von Graffenklau a simple knight, things would go much better for Empire and for Emperor."

But Sickingen could soon perceive that the "old music" of the Imperial Council of Regency was not so entirely played out. In the first place, Richard von Graffenklau, like many of the prince-bishops of those days, who used to wear helm, hauberk, and sword, was as much a soldier as a priest. He showed himself on the battlements, and led on his burghers to the defence of the walls. Everything seemed to depend on the good towns to which Hutten had appealed. If they had brought their engines of war, the falconets and mangonels in which the knights were lacking, Treves could have been besieged in regular form. But the burghers did not move. The town of Strasburg sent Sickingen some money, but Metz sent engines and ammunition to Treves. As for the peasants, they began, no doubt, to be excited at the sound of reform, and would have risen after the knights had taken up arms, but they expected prophets to begin the war, instead of the petty lords who had done nothing but oppress them; they looked on timidly at what went on around them, and bided their time.

Not even all the knights of Germany could give their support to Sickingen. The more immediate neighbours of the Archbishop of Treves, as for instance, the Archbishop of Cologne, with a view to isolating and circumscribing the movement, forbade their knights to move a step on pain of forfeiting their estates and even their lives. The young Landgrave of Hesse, a private enemy of Sickingen, fell upon a troop of knights, whom Menkwitz was bringing from Brunswick, and routed them completely. The knights of Westphalia and Luxemburg did not dare to combine their forces; and soon the Elector Palatine and the Landgrave of Hesse, charged with the execution of the Imperial ban, which had been formerly pronounced

against Sickingen by the Council of Regency, began to march against the revolted knights. Before a city which defended itself ably, and exposed to the attack of an army which was coming up to her relief, Sickingen did not feel himself in a position to await the arrival of a superior force. He dispersed his followers, to wreak their anger upon the hostile territory, appointing a meeting for the following spring, and on the 1st of January, 1523, entered his most substantial stronghold at Landstuhl.

Sickingen showed, on this occasion, a want of energy and prudence. His enemies took advantage of the winter to attack by means of the towns of the Swabian League, the knights who were isolated from one another, to force those who had advanced from their castles to return, and to prevent the rest from advancing.

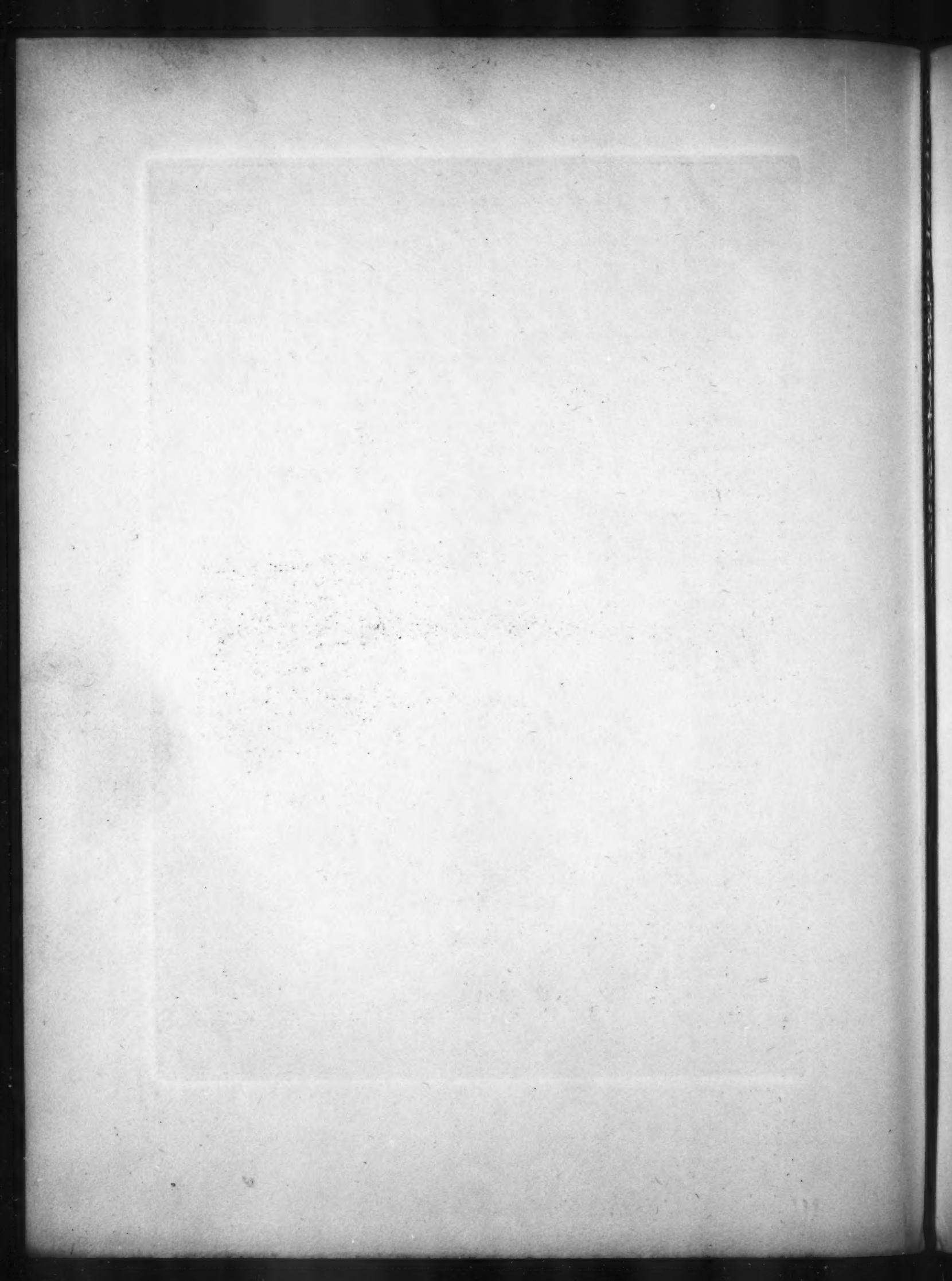
When Sickingen was isolated in his turn, the princes who were charged with the execution of the Imperial ban, the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Elector of Treves, came in their turn to besiege Landstuhl, so as to take the bird in his own nest. In vain did he and Hutten appeal to the knights, to Strasburg, to the Swiss towns; in vain did Sickingen look even for a movement among the Lutherans. He soon began to realize that the day of the knights, and of the strong towers perched on the summits of mountains, had come to an end before the progress of the engines of artillery, with which the princes were well provided. Employed incessantly in repairing the enormous breaches made in the walls by the bombards, he was struck in the side by a fragment of wood, broken off by a shot from a biscayan, at the moment when he was giving orders on the battlements. He was carried, mortally wounded in lung and liver, into the lower hall beneath the sombre vaulted roofs of Landstuhl, and was there undressed to have his wound attended to. "Where," he asked sadly, "are my friends the knights, and the Strasburgers and Swiss?" He soon saw his enemies at his deathbed, the breach having been forced on the 6th of May; the young Landgrave and the Archbishop of Treves were about to address him in terms of reproach.

"I have to answer to another master!" he said.

And when his chaplain, a priest of the new school, asked him by

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way of putting him to the test if he must listen to his confession, he answered : "I have confessed to God in my heart."

The fall of Landstuhl was the victory of the princes over the knights, of artillery over castles. It was the signal for the fall and destruction of Ebernburg, Steckelberg, and many other strong castles by the hands, and for the advantage, of the princes and towns. "Their bitterness is against the knightly order, not against me," Sickingen had said with reason. This institution of the Middle Ages found its destruction in trying to draw new strength from this entirely modern revolution of the sixteenth century; nor was this by any means an evil. The victory of the knights would have been the triumph of ignorance and anarchy, of that brigandage from which the "Centaurs," as Hutten had called them, were not completely weaned, as was shewn by the fact that their hatred against the lawyers was even more inveterate than against the theologians. Hutten did not long survive their fall. Proscribed, wandering from town to town, he disputed now with Erasmus, who had refused to see him at Basle, and his zeal for reform was beginning to cool when he reached the town of Zurich, worn out with privations, fatigue, and the results of youthful excesses, and sought an asylum in the very house of another reformer, Zwingli, then minister of Zurich, under whose roof he died.

"Is that the terrible Hutten," said the Swiss reformer, "that worker of destruction, whom I see so gentle with the common people and with little children? Is it possible that that mouth, which now breathes only sweetness itself, once uttered such a storm against the Papists?"

Strange destiny, that of the two last representatives of the old German chivalry; each of them died in the arms of an apostle of reform. Though their enterprise was a failure, the poet laureate and the knight remained inseparably united in the memory of the humanists and the knights of the sixteenth century as the last defenders of an institution which was passing away, and of a state of things which was disappearing.

The humanists then said that letters would be ungrateful if they did not preserve eternally the memory of the poet and publicist Hutten, whom they called the awakener of the world. The Landsknechts long repeated a refrain, in which, in remembrance of the love which Sickingen had for

men at arms, "they regretted that the shedding of his noble blood had remained unavenged." Legend has often loved to see in these two men the heroes and victims of liberty and of their country, although they more than once waged war against both one and the other. Even to this day, amid the ruins of the castle of Ebernburg, where the destroying cannon-balls have been preserved, one sees the façade still standing upright with the fine helmeted lion and the fleur-de-lys of Sickingen's coat of arms. German students often go there to contemplate sundry statues, groups, or portraits, some of them authentic, which represent the two knights joined closely in a common cause, Sickingen always in armour, Hutten attired sometimes as a courtier, sometimes as a knight. One group, not devoid of life, represents the poet in a courtier's dress, holding a bundle of pamphlets in his hand, and the knight in his armour unsheathing his sword.

The new German Emperor has been magnanimous enough to allow a recent festival to celebrate the apotheosis of these two knights, who were simply rebels against the old *régime*, not refusing to believe that they were good German patriots.

JULES ZELLER,
of the Institute.





REMINISCENCES OF THE ISLE OF CROISSY

IMPRESSIONS OF A DROWNED MAN

Although you see me now in good condition, with something of a healthy colour in my cheeks, yet I was once drowned; I repeat—*drowned*. That is, as much as a man can be drowned, who, many years after, is able to invite the reader to participate in the ordeal, the memory of which comes upon him at times with a terrible vividness of supreme suffering.

Of course you know “La Grenouillère” at Croissy, and the island with its steep banks, Maurice the fisherman, Mère Souvent, Seurin’s ferry-boat, the quiet water on one side of the island, and the main stream on the other, and lastly, the tug, the terror of all boating men and swimmers, which slowly tows its strings of barges as they arrive from the north; the tug, screeching and ruthless like a horde of barbarians, its windlass abaft winding up the dull green *herbes à écrevisses* which have been uprooted, and which the boatman, with a kind of spear, now gathers in a heap on the deck, and then throws back again into the

stream, to be borne along in immense green patches from the bridge of Chatou, as far as the hydraulic machine at Marly.

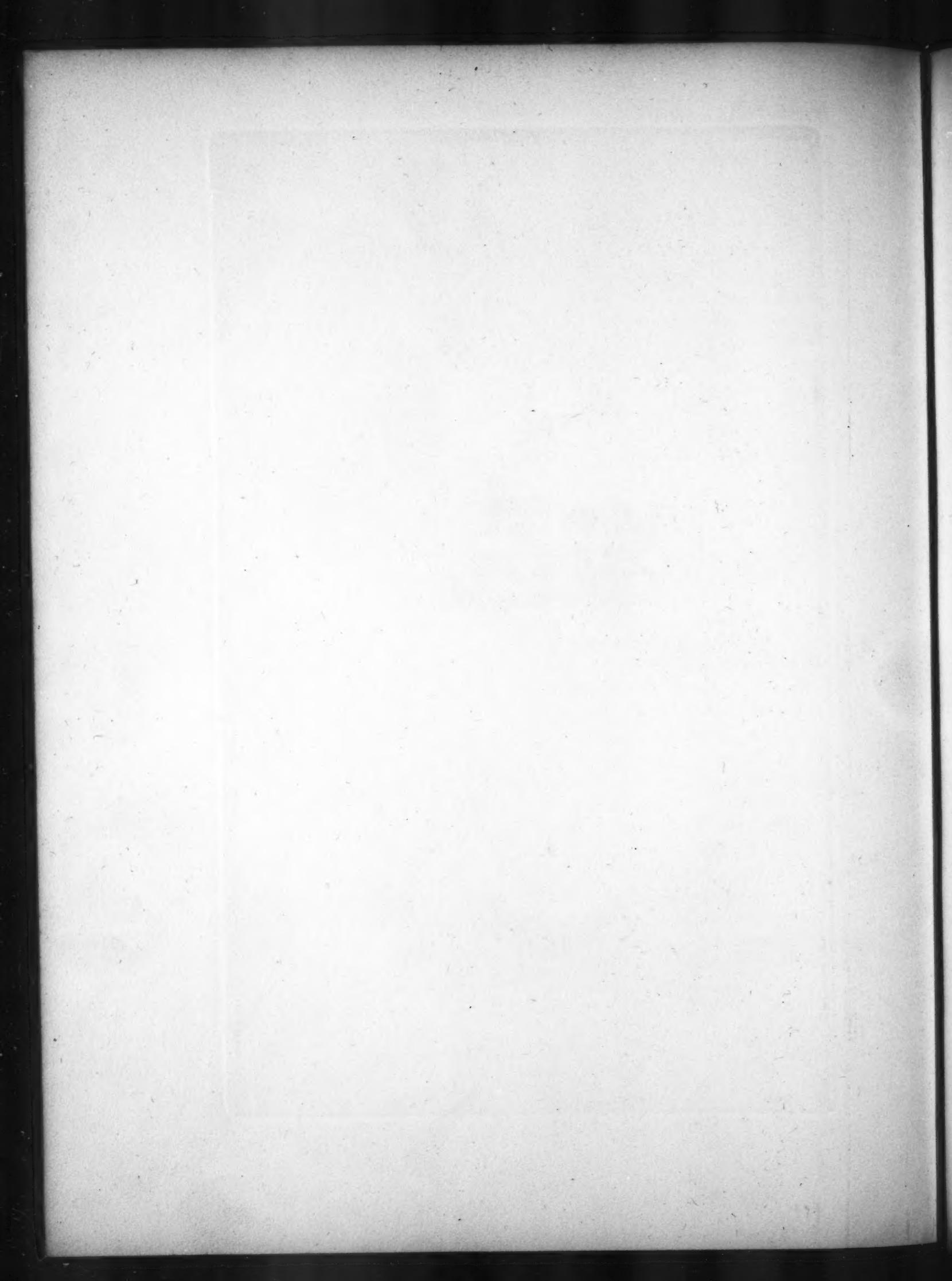
What a charming place it was! What beautiful landscapes! And ah! what pleasant days have I passed there! Where are now the lofty Italian poplars which were wont to throw their shadows over the boat, and where is the old silvery willow of the little islet of the Cap des Torses, and, on the islet itself, the little green bank of the "Vieille garde," our bathing head-quarters? Where are the flowery slopes, where, in the heyday of youth, we revelled in song and mirth?

The year of the invasion saw the sacred little wood, which sheltered Blanche, the nymph of the island, fall beneath the Teuton axe. Blanche is now a grandmother—and our regrets for her are superfluous.

At the time of which I am speaking, the Isle of Croissy was still known by its old name, the Isle of Aligre, and it had the appearance of a desert island. Nature, silent but fruitful, accomplished its work there; and bold adventurers, coming from the broad reach of Argenteuil—so famed for its sailing boats—or from the well-known banks of Asnières-les-Bains, as they landed had to force their way through the tall bind-weeds which encircled the willows. The natives were yet scarce, and always scantily clothed; their female companions were by no means behind the civilization of the city, and were ever ready to welcome the visitor.

The faun of this island—who might be seen there at any time, either lifting a net, collecting mushrooms, or, in the meditative attitude of an angler, silently skirting the bank in a wherry which he occupied alone with his dog, which lay in the forepart—was an Italian, enjoying the sonorous name of Gian Giacomo Carcano. He had taken refuge in France after the Lombardian insurrections; but not till he had been hunted through all the provinces then under the Austrian sway, condemned to death by the *Tedeschi*, and had seen his property sequestered, his kith and kin imprisoned, and the gates of his country closed to him. Befriended, however, by the members of the secret societies of Ticino, he had at first led a wanderer's life, and thus avoided the *sbirri*; then, making for Switzerland, he crossed the frontier, and eventually reached France, where he found other exiles like himself.





Carcano was then about fifty years of age, very short of stature, very stout, and slow in his movements. He limped, too, very much, from a sabre-cut received during his service in the Italian war of independence; but he was withal well set-up, hardy, and of great strength. His features were full of character, and reminded one of Fiorentino; though his build and gait were more like those of Sancho Panza. His demeanour was free and courteous; you felt that you had a true gentleman before you. All the exiles of rank and position recognized him as one of themselves, whether they were Neapolitans, Venetians, or Lombards. Despite his wound, which, he said, dated from the time when he was a refugee with Garibaldi and Anita in the pine forest of Ravenna, I always considered that there was more of the conspirator in him than of the man of action. He was reticent, and seemed to like the mysterious; he spoke rarely, although he was well acquainted with the affairs of others in which he took interest; and finally, no one had any clear knowledge as to who he was. But the names of Prince Belgiojoso, Count Resta, the Manaras, the Marquis Raimondi di Varese, were often heard to fall from his lips; so that at length, with the knowledge of the place of his birth, deduced from slight indications gathered in the course of conversation with him, we were able to satisfy ourselves as to the truth of his statements, and the status of his family.

Weary of struggling with the difficulties of existence in a large town, and desiring to live a life free and natural, and one more in accord with his great poverty, Carcano established himself at Croissy, whither a brother of the great Alboni, who was residing at the time in this locality, had led him. Not wishing to be dependent, refusing all help, and resolved not to admit any one as a witness of his privations, he had taken up his quarters in the most modest manner possible, in a garret which was let to him by a laundress, in the house I was living in at the time, near the gate of the château of Espréménil, facing the lane leading to La Grenouillère. An old boat for fishing purposes, apparatus, and nets made by himself during the long winter evenings, with a carpenter's bench, and some indispensable pieces of furniture, were his first expenses in settling there. He lived a solitary, secluded life, providing and cooking

his own food, and at the most only requiring the services of a child to run on a few errands; frequently letting down and drawing up by means of a string his provision basket, as if he were living in the Via Toledo at Naples or in the Campo San Stefano at Venice. In the earlier days of his exile, impoverished by the expense of setting up housekeeping, being a skilful angler, and a lucky one to boot, he had supplied Seurin, the ferry-man, who found a difficulty in satisfying the demand for *mateletes* on the part of the Parisians boarding at his establishment. One could not, therefore, withhold a certain amount of respect for this Lombardian patrician, who, every day of his life, at all seasons, clothed in a water-proof coat and a pea-jacket, displaying spotlessly white linen, and on his head a military leathern *képi*, sallied forth with his apparatus at his back, to gain his daily bread by means of a fish-hook.

His prestige as patriot and conspirator, his skill as trapper, his thorough intimacy with the phenomena of nature, a true originality in all he did, and a certain innate grandiose familiarity which caused him to treat on an equality both rich and poor, while it disarmed the most pretentious by making them doubt their own superiority—had charmed those who approached him, and gathered around him the greatest and highest of those who resided in the neighbourhood. Carcano accordingly soon became popular along the river.

His apartment had a strange appearance. Day by day, with immense labour, and as they were required, he had furnished it with all the articles necessary for his singular mode of life. The room was a spacious one, and had a bright and wholesome look about it. Four imaginary lines divided the workshop from the dining-room, and the kitchen from the drawing-room, which was also his bedroom; a space was also found for the pantry, and there was a kennel in which a handsome thoroughbred retriever, after sharing the Italian's fortunes when avoiding the *sbirri*, now shared his exile. The fishing tackle, oars, and spears, were hung around the walls of the apartment forming a sort of frieze, and in one of the two wide windows, the carpenter's bench, surrounded with all the requisite tools, and a lathe, showed the part which had been assigned for the workshop. At one end, above the iron bedstead, with its bedding of

irreproachable whiteness, the patriot's weapons were arranged as a trophy, and on a small toilet-table by the side, were set out a few odd gilt-topped pieces, the remnants of a magnificent dressing-case. A leather-covered sofa for a siesta, with three chairs for guests and conversation,—such was the drawing-room, which, on high days, became the dining-room by bringing the massive round table from the kitchen. I had almost forgotten two landscapes by a master hand, relics of better times, and a portrait of Prince Belgiojoso, bare-chested—a superb, powerful portrait painted by Commander Bertini of Milan. But the most original portion was the pantry, in which were hanging an enormous Bologna sausage, and, beside it, some large red and green pumpkins, which endangered the head of the visitor, with strings of morels and green pimentos awaiting their time of dryness or maturity. Nothing was superfluous, nothing confused; everything told of the instincts, needs, tastes, and life of the exile.

Carcano was not only an exceptionally good angler, he was also an excellent cook. I was one of the first to know it; his naturally proud disposition had yielded to my youthful ingenuousness, and to the extent to which I had become captivated by his patriotism, and by his contrivances in fishing and trapping.

One winter's day he was limping worse than usual, for his wound gave him great pain; and he had not only taken my arm, but was also leaning on his hooked walking-stick. We were walking by the river; on our right extended the fields, which were now lying fallow, dotted here and there with manure heaps half covered with snow. I was trying to pick out the easiest path for him, but felt that he was pulling me persistently towards one of these hillocks. Before long, he produced his hunting knife, and stooping down painfully, he disinterred from the earth some root which had lain forgotten beneath the fermenting heap. As he raised himself he showed me a spike of asparagus, and throwing it into the little osier basket, which he carried constantly, attached to a shoulder-strap, said seriously: "That will just do to flavour an omelet."

Next day, when, for the first time, I was admitted to his garret, and inhaled the delicate odour of the omelet browned to a turn, and still

smoking, I learnt how great artists obtained powerful effects by apparently insignificant means.

Disderi, the famous photographer, who was then in possession of a château at Rueil, and who crushed his neighbour Dollingen completely by the splendour of his equipages, by his tall figure, and by the great length of his beard, was really the first to overcome Carcano's reserve, and to find out how he managed at home for himself. Disderi had conquered the exile by his extraordinary skill in angling; Carcano confessed himself beaten, saying that he had seen him pull out carp as big as "oun enfant," yet, whenever I approached on tiptoe, and holding my breath, so as not to make the least disturbance, and to bear witness to his achievements, it always happened that Disderi had just missed a fine catch.

When the sequestration of the properties confiscated by the Austrians was withdrawn, a new era commenced for the refugee. He might have gone back to his native land, but he preferred to wait until the formula, "Italy free from the Alps to the Adriatic" should be realized. Thenceforth, the straitened circumstances of Carcano were at an end, and his room became the scene of many a good dinner. Alboni, the singer, did not disdain to prepare the maccaroni, while Carcano undertook the ravioli and the pulpettini. Émile Augier (who had taken him for his *Le Nôtre*, while he was at Croissy, engaged in clearing his garden and in planting the beautiful trees which now shelter the author of *L'Aventurière*), Meissonier, Lireux, Mermet, Schimone, all were Carcano's guests by turns, in small parties of three at a time, without counting occasionally some pretty *pensionnaires* of the Comédie-Française. His lodging itself was in no way changed, and the attendance was as simple as before; the only concession that Carcano made was not to wash up the plates and dishes himself. He still continued to select his vegetables, to light his fire, to attend to the cooking, and to wait on his guests.

Carcano had taken me under his protection, and it was decreed that he should be instrumental in saving my life. In order to understand thoroughly the circumstances, I must remind the reader what sort of place La Grenouillère was,—alas! nearly thirty years ago. Since that time it has found its Watteau in the painter Heilbuth, but La Grenouillère had

not as yet such a handsome aspect as he has given it in his picture bearing the name of the place. Nor did so many noisy, open-breasted boatmen frequent the spot as now invade it, avenging themselves for their toil during the week by so scaring the good people who occupy the villas by the river side, that they have to keep within their doors on the Sunday. No, there you were quite at home, and at your ease in the midst of your family, in any of the white villas which rise one above the other, along the hill slopes from La Jonchère to the Marly water-works. The same may be said of the opposite side of the river, between Chatou and the bridge of Croissy; and also of any of the pretty riverside inns, which were so much in favour that, gradually, nearly all the rooms were taken by the year, and where all the visitors, who as a rule knew one another, passed their time in a pleasant, unconstrained companionship, and where, too, you could depend upon getting *mateotes*, stewed rabbits, and fried fish in perfection.

Most of us were one day to be artists, men of letters, or high officials. If we did lounge about in delightful idleness, we knew what our duty was, and our studies were not neglected. At night-time our habits were peaceful and unoffending, and our pleasures were within the bounds of decorum. In the pale brightness of the moon, with the thoughtlessness of youth, which laughs at the inevitable rheumatism of the future, we might take to our light skiffs; or, now and then, we would, with some difficulty, transport Olivier de Gourgault's piano in a heavy fishing-boat, and after skimming the water with a rapid oar, cast anchor silently under the balcony of one of the *chalets* by the river. Then in the silence of the night, a youthful, amorous, trembling voice, would sing *La Sérénade*, which was echoed by the banks. Soon the blind might be heard to creak, a faint glimmer lighted the window, and a white figure came forward, and looked down from the balcony.

Another time we had arranged a ball on the towing-path in front of Maurice's cabaret. Ah! how all the world was ours then! In the quadrille, the prettiest actresses of Paris faced future members of the Académie Française; poor Bizet, the author of *Carmen*, would at such times take his seat at the piano, and at the liveliest part of the dance the warning

cry of "The rope!" might occasionally be heard. Then the heavy, towing horses had the ball-room to themselves, and snapped like a thread the string which held up the illuminations so carefully arranged by Sophie and the little Charles, while our frightened partners gathered up their skirts and fled. I also remember, for I wish to conceal nothing, that one autumn morning, after the ball at the *fête* at Bougival, the steadiest among us were obliged to go and obtain the release from the guard-house of the *mairie* of the village, of three sons of officials, high and sedate officials, too. These young fellows had been arrested at the boating-club ball, and were now locked up for resisting the authorities; their offence really being that they had persisted in whirling round and round by themselves in wild disorder in front of the washerwomen of Rueil, after the *garde champêtre* had forbidden it.

We did, indeed, work well sometimes, but it was nevertheless a perpetual Decameron; we lived in the water, on the water, or on the bank, in absolute freedom and ease, according to our own fancy, and in complete unmindfulness of what we were to suffer in time to come. In the evening the little alcoves in Maurice's garden, his kiosque, tables, and alleys, assumed a brilliant aspect. Sophie, the fisherman's daughter, who was close upon ten years of age, and Charles, her brother, as they returned from school, seemed to take pleasure in serving us under the direction of their aunt Gautheron. We were gay, yet within bounds, our appetites amazing, yet always the same. As the heat of the day diminished, grave and important personages, decorously clothed in black, and presenting a striking contrast to our uniform and unvarying white flannel, would arrive from the station at Rueil by the coach, dining regularly beyond the city's walls throughout the summer season, and bringing us the echoes of the great town about which none of us much troubled ourselves. Politics were dead; Édouard Hervé was as yet unknown; Baudelaire, serious, clean-shaven, and with his neck bare, may possibly have created a little sensation among the young artists of our circle, by spreading the news that Whistler was in the city, and that Théophile Gautier, the blameless poet, whose brow well represented the lofty conceptions of the renascence of poetry, was coming slowly along the riverside towards us, discoursing as a

peripatetic, and escorted by Théodore de Banville and Poulet-Malassis.

Ten years afterwards our Decameron afforded a *rendez-vous* for the leaders of Opportunism who succeeded us in those arbours; and to this day Maurice still points to a framed portrait over his mantel-piece, with the inscription : "Gambetta à son ami le pêcheur." But at the time of which I am now speaking, nobody aspired to be the people's shepherd; we did not even cast an eager eye on the evening paper which Laurent-Jan, author of *Misanthropie et Repentir*, regularly left on the table; the Bourse quotations which Lireux, who has since become a financier, threw over the trellis-work among us as he came back from the station, were as flat as ditch-water; and, opposed to the æsthetic vein, we carefully avoided Chenavard's dull prolonged discourses, which, however, Ricard could endure, as he had acquired the art of listening throughout the evening without understanding them.

Our time had not arrived for these things; and besides, politics had been violently put to death by the *Coup d'État*; we were simply idyllists, guitarists, and optimists; our naturalists were Champfleury, Gustave Mathieu, and Châtillon; our divinities, André Chénier, Hugo, Musset, Dumas, and Vigny; we dared to believe in Lamartine, despite the feebleness of his rhyme, and we knew by heart *Émaux et Camées*, *Midi roi des Étés*, and the *Poèmes barbares*. The odour of sulphur which Baudelaire shed around him, attracted us; *La Levrette en paletot* of Auguste de Châtillon delighted us; Manet had no existence as yet; Delacroix, Troyon, Millet, and Rousseau were our masters; Courbet was not yet duly appreciated but he had already an admirer in Castagnary; Corot, our neighbour of Ville-d'Avray, also came at times to smoke his "pipette" with us at the riverside; and, on grand days, Charton-Demeur would bring with him worthy Berlioz, sad and grave, sardonic and bantering, who, full of the *Troyens* and of Shakespeare, would repeat to us in one of the alcoves the last *bon mot* of Heinrich Heine, whom he had just seen lying on his bed of suffering.

These details give approximately the date of the adventure. My duty was then keeping me the entire day in the Bois du Vésinet which was being cleared, and in which the Government intended to build a large asylum.

I had not therefore yet chosen the fisherman's cabaret for my fixed residence; it was only my house of call, where I took my daily board, and where I refreshed myself amidst pleasant company. In order to be at once within range of my duties and pleasures I had taken my abode half-way between, in the village of Croissy, in the very house in which Carcano lived. Gradually he and I became friendly. Every day at sunset, when La Grenouillère was deserted and the last bathers had either returned to their homes, or had gone off to Fournaise's at Chatou, Souvent's at Bougival, or Maurice's on the outskirts of Rueil by the river, I forsook the works at Le Vésinet with alacrity, and no matter what the weather was, I loosened the ferry-boat and crossed to the Isle of Croissy, where, in the quiet water, my own boat was moored; and with hurried strokes I pursued my way to the fisherman's, sure of finding genial company. As late as possible after the customary amusements or our nocturnal sallies, I took the same road back.

From July to September—there were such things as summers in those days—instead of descending by boat from La Grenouillère, I pushed into the open stream and, plunging into the water, reached the shore where Hero awaited Leander—for have I not already implied that it was the Golden Age?

One evening at the end of September, a little later than usual, my canoe was floating adrift in this way between La Grenouillère and the point by Maurice's, and I, floating on my back with arms extended, allowed myself to be carried along by the current in the midst of a silence as profound as though I had been alone in the world. Not a boat was to be seen up or down the river, nor was there the least ripple on its surface. Cradled thus upon the water, devoid of any thought of danger, so acquainted with this part of the river that the position of every obstacle in it was known to me, all I had to do was to raise my head from time to time slightly to see where my boat was drifting. And I continued to float along gently, without making the least movement, watching the clouds as they passed along in a serene sky. Presently, seeing the boat had been caught by the trunk of a willow which projected into the stream, I turned over, and with a vigorous stroke made for the bank.

But before making an energetic movement of this kind, a swimmer bears strongly on his chest and raises himself above the water; and in so doing, I saw that a slowly moving layer of *herbes à écrevisses*, which had been detached from the river's bed by the tug's chain and was now hardly to be seen above the surface of the water, had surrounded me on all sides.

Thank Heaven, I was collected, fresh, and active; the boat was not very far away, Maurice also was near, and surely in that little creek, hidden by the willows, where he had baited for so long, Carcano would, as usual, be fishing till nightfall. All I had to do then was to go up stream instead of going down, and I should get clear of the dangerous mass of weeds in which I had imprudently become entangled by floating on my back as described, without once looking behind me.

But right and left the green expanse was before me; thousands upon thousands of slender fibrils, like living tentacles, hung above me, twined themselves around my limbs, and continually increasing, impeded my movements. It seemed as though the weeds, instead of descending with the stream, ascended it with me and pursued me. I, however, acted calmly and coolly, and felt that I could hold out for a long time; but it was evident I could not extricate myself without assistance, and so, with an anxious eye, I scanned the places along the banks whence I could expect help. Ah! if there, a hundred strokes off, one of our company should be crossing over to the island, he would see and clear my boat, jump into it, and I should be safe. But not a soul was in sight; I could no longer hesitate; it was necessary to call for aid. Yet, before calling, I tried, as I had often been recommended to do in such an emergency by experienced watermen, to float without moving, so that the weeds might fall away of their own accord; but they were slowly and surely coiling themselves closer around me, and perceiving my great danger, I shouted loudly and desperately—"Help! Carcano! Maurice!"

There was no answer. My bonds were drawing tighter, and my legs now and my whole body, were caught and enveloped by the viscous threads. Then the sensation of cold, inevitable, immediate death revealed itself to me; and, as in a flash of lightning—a second as regards time,

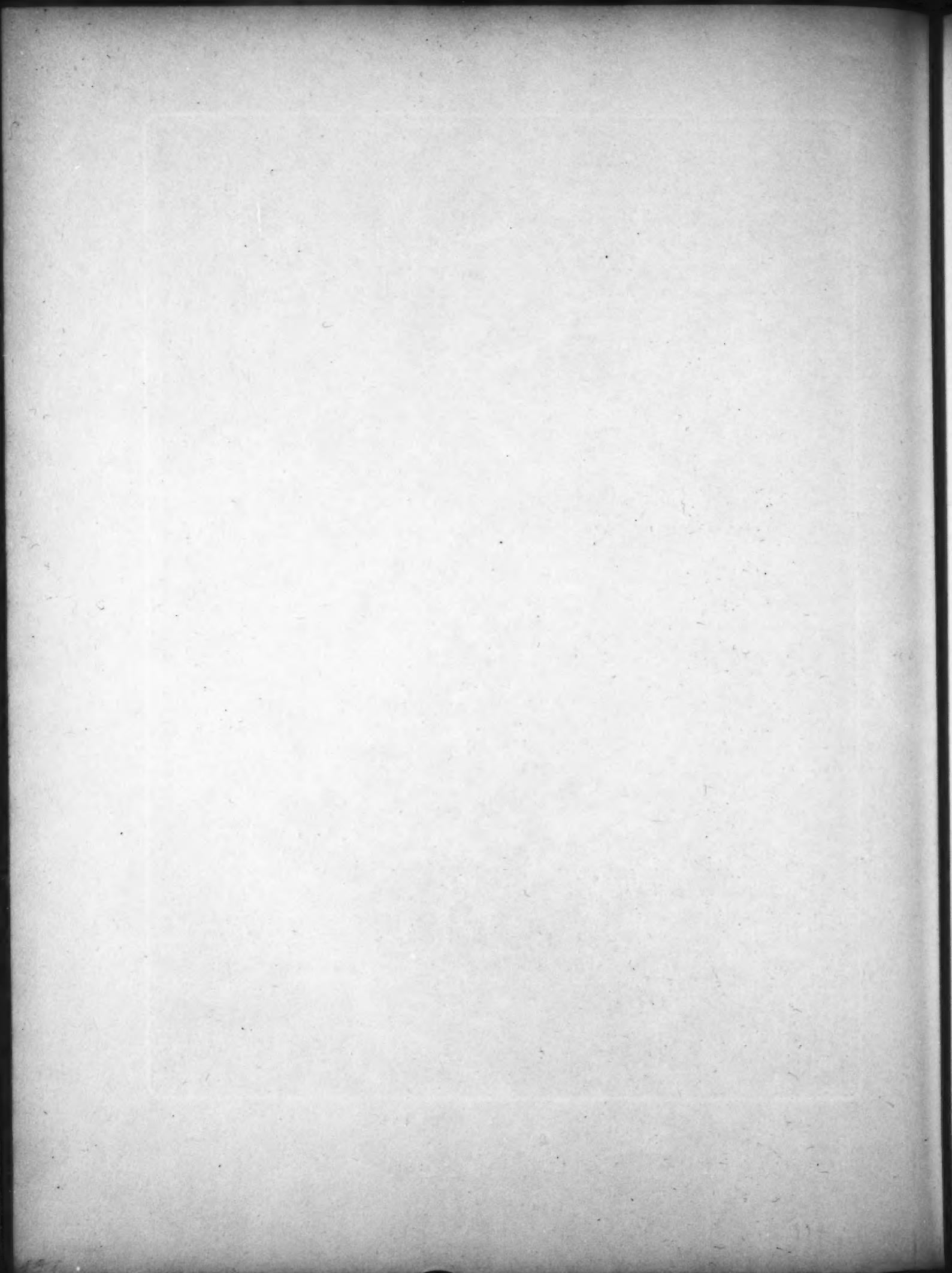
but an age as regards the multiplicity and details of visions—I saw one by one the various scenes of my life; my mother first, and then a little brother who died in early infancy; another peril which was also due to imprudence on my part, and by which I had already been face to face with death; and then my first love who smiled on me; my joy at approaching manhood; my hopes as an artist; my life, in short, complete with all its joys and sorrows—then this death, obscure and pitiless, which had now hold of me, in full strength of my manhood, and in the midst of my aspirations. All this passed clearly and rapidly before me, the various scenes in a sequence which might be called simultaneous; as if, before obliterating the record for ever, the Angel of Death was displaying before me his funeral scroll. And the clammy weeds were now about my lips and over my face, weaving my shroud. My arms grew powerless—I was sinking—already my mouth was closed—my eyes were dimmed; yet I fancied I was still calling, and I could hear an indistinct humming, loud and confused voices—then a frightful pang—one last cry—a rush of blood to eyes and brain—death!

Maurice and Carcano have many times since related to me the end of this adventure; and even now, when, in commemoration of my deliverance, I return to the locality at least once a year, to realize my terrible experience, the old fisherman is always ready to talk about it.

Whilst I was floating down the stream so unsuspectingly, Carcano, as I had imagined, was finishing his evening's sport in the little creek screened by the old willow which had caught my boat; but the branches hid him completely from my sight. My first cry, which I thought so piercing, must have been given with failing strength, but it had attracted his attention. Carcano was, however, mistrustful; those amateur watermen were such practical jokers, and had rendered him sceptical as to people drowning in this part. With great deliberation he had left the creek just at the moment when, through my re-ascending the stream so as to get clear of the weeds, I could not see him. At the same time Maurice and his assistant, on the other side of the point, had loosened their boat and pulled their hardest towards me. It must have been their shout of encouragement and the sound of their oars which I heard during my last







agony; and, just as I was sinking, I felt a blow which was from the steering pole of Carcano, who, being the first to arrive on the spot, had thrust it at random into the greenish mass which still kept a little above the surface. Maurice afterwards told me that, when he reached the floating weeds, he did not think it possible that the strongest swimmer could have got clear. By skilfully working his boat, while Carcano was holding on to his pole like grim death, he managed to bring it parallel to the Italian's, and then, passing his heavy oar beneath the mass of weeds, which held me as in a net, he caught it under Carcano's boat, and thus, using it as a lever—with Herculean strength—he kept me above the water, and enabled my friend at the same time to regain his equipoise and to complete my rescue.

A few minutes later I was lying at the bottom of Maurice's boat, which was moored close to the inn, and Carcano, who was provided against every emergency, drew from his familiar wicker basket which he always carried, some powerful cordial and poured it down my throat. He had already, with his flannel jacket, almost rubbed the skin off my chest, had attended to my bruises, and rubbed, pounded, and manipulated my body. When Dr. de Borgia, a name in my case of happy omen, came to my aid with his medicine case and appliances, my pulse was already beating. I lay, however, motionless, like one dead; yet, although incapable of giving any indication of life, I was conscious, and with perfect accuracy could distinguish the noises on the bank, the remarks of the bystanders and of those who were attending me; but doubtless, none of them had any idea that I could hear what was said.

"Monsieur Charles— Eh! Monsieur Charles!" said Maurice with his mouth close to my ear, so close that I felt his breath, but could make him no answer; while Carcano kept on rubbing me, and at that moment was so tickling the soles of my feet that I would have called out. My lips, however, remained closed, and my heavy eyelids refused to open, although I was conscious of all the bustle and commotion around me.

"Poor young fellow!" said an old woman, "he is scarcely twenty yet."

"Ah! Here's a man drowned," said another.

"Now then! stand back and let us have a little fresh air," cried Maurice, getting up, the crowd probably having encroached too close upon us.

Weary of listening to these remarks, I relapsed into unconsciousness, and remained in a heavy slumber resembling the torpor of death.

I awoke rather late the next morning, and found myself in a charming, bright bedroom; on the wall facing me, supported on a bracket, and framed as it were by the muslin curtains of my bed, was a beautiful figure of the Virgin in gilt porcelain, with Sophie's first-communion picture and the bridal wreath of Mère Maurice under a shade. A bright ray of sunshine lighted the apartment. Aunt Gautheron, in her lace cap, well starched and goffered, was at the bedside, her wrinkled face pale with watching me throughout the night. As she saw me open my eyes she smiled as if on a young child. Poor Carcano, my rescuer, was snoring loudly in a spacious arm-chair at the foot of the bed, his large spectacles over his eyes, and a number of the *Gazzetta Piemontese* on his knees.

MARQUIS DE VILLEMER.





In a small forge at the top of the palace, a workshop littered with tools and scraps of iron where the loud noises of the royal courts die away, in the silence, as it were, of a church; standing before a vice in the red glow of the furnace a strong man is hammering without cessation. This quiet workman, with his blackened shirt, his forehead dripping with sweat, and his apron besmirched with slag, is the King, the King of France, and through the half-opened door curious and wondering faces dive into the den, the outlines of gilded and belaced lackeys may be made out, sneering eyes smile. Every instant there is some respectful greeting, an official communication lost in the ringing of the anvil, checked only by a sudden silence, by an impatient shrug of the shoulders, or by the never-failing formula—"Leave me alone. Later on." And then the task is taken up again with a will, with enthusiasm, liberty is regained, oblivion of everyday grandeurs, of idle *fêtes*, comes back for the moment, an hour of peaceful obscurity amidst the din. Here lies the whole explanation of the coming catastrophe, the ultimate cause of all the negligences and weaknesses, the reason of the assumed boldness.

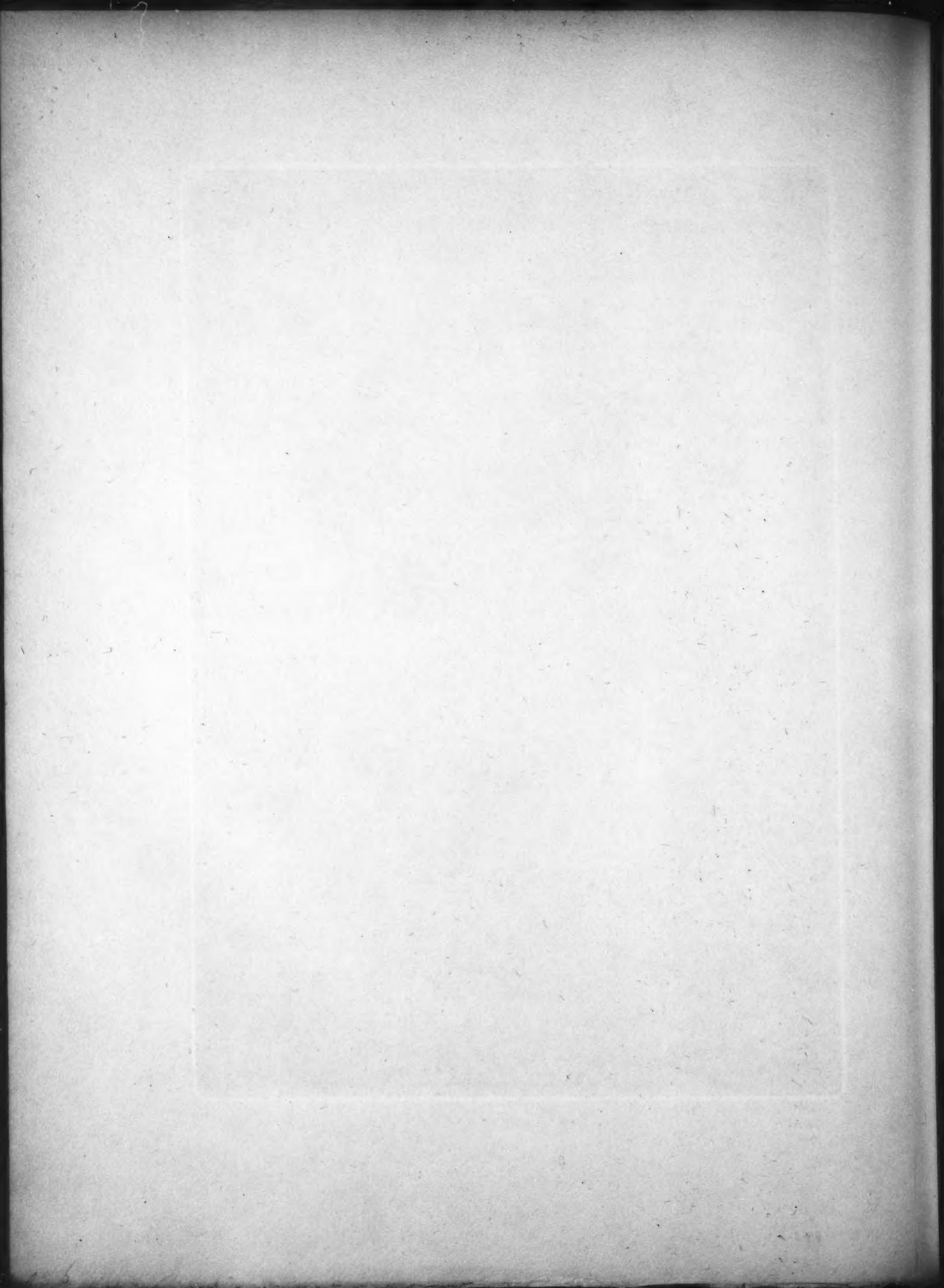
A monarch was wanted; it was a workman who came forth, a youth

with big muscles and timid, a *bourgeois* of magnificent appetite, living à l'Émile, fearful of women, and seeking in violent exercise an outlet for his overflowing vigour. A Saxon head, laughing, prepossessing, round and commonplace, with big, clear, frank eyes, a full mouth, a firm nose, the true son of Marie-Joseph, the good Germanic prince, without passions, without vices, almost without faults, and yet, without royal qualities. The chances of primogeniture seated the least gifted of the three sons on the throne; he himself said so, and recognized the fact so well that he asked no formal etiquette from his brothers. He was bored by this magnificence; his exalted position disturbed and hampered him. He was good, after the manner of simple folk, and if some beauty capable of convulsing a kingdom came across his path he heeded not, he stared her out of countenance, told her what he thought of her, and sent her home to her children who were crying for her.

Louis XVI is an antithesis by no means looked for in the French Court, a sort of phenomenon, an abortive shoot of the tree royal. He gives the lie to tradition, he overturns accepted theories. To study philosophy, to abandon oneself to the investigation of social problems like the Comte de Provence, is still to cling to one's race by an admitted tie; to love horses, to patronize English jockeys, to seek pleasure like the Comte d'Artois, to fling away gold on gambling, and diamonds on actresses, is also to follow the Bourbon traditions. But to stop one's carriage in the open country to drive a plough, to help to set up a tumbled-down coach, to go up hill and down dale clad in a drugget, to hammer at a bit of iron for days together, to blow the fire like a tinker, to turn the lathe, to mix mortar, to make designs !

And to crown it all, what a dialect! Instead of those swelling phrases, honeyed and elegant, in vogue among the very door-keepers and serving-men in a great house, coarse and forcible words shot out headlong, and the bearing of a locksmith, rough common sense, ever inclined to burst out laughing, a deplorable education, horny hands! France has to thank the Duc de la Vauguyon, his tutor, for this great benefit, that Guilly, Prince of Carency like a Des Cars, Comte de Saint-Mégrin like a favourite of Henri III's, Comte de Porrhoët like a Rohan—the man whom later





Marie-Antoinette will call to account for his misdeeds. Perhaps too, Madame Adélaïde, the King's aunt, deserved a share of the reproach. It was to her that the fat-cheeked and troublesome Dauphin came to forget his lessons, it was she who spoilt him, who opened her cupboards for him and would say good-naturedly : "Come along, my poor Berry, here you can do as you like, my child. You have plenty of room, make a good row, smash, break everything. I give you full leave."

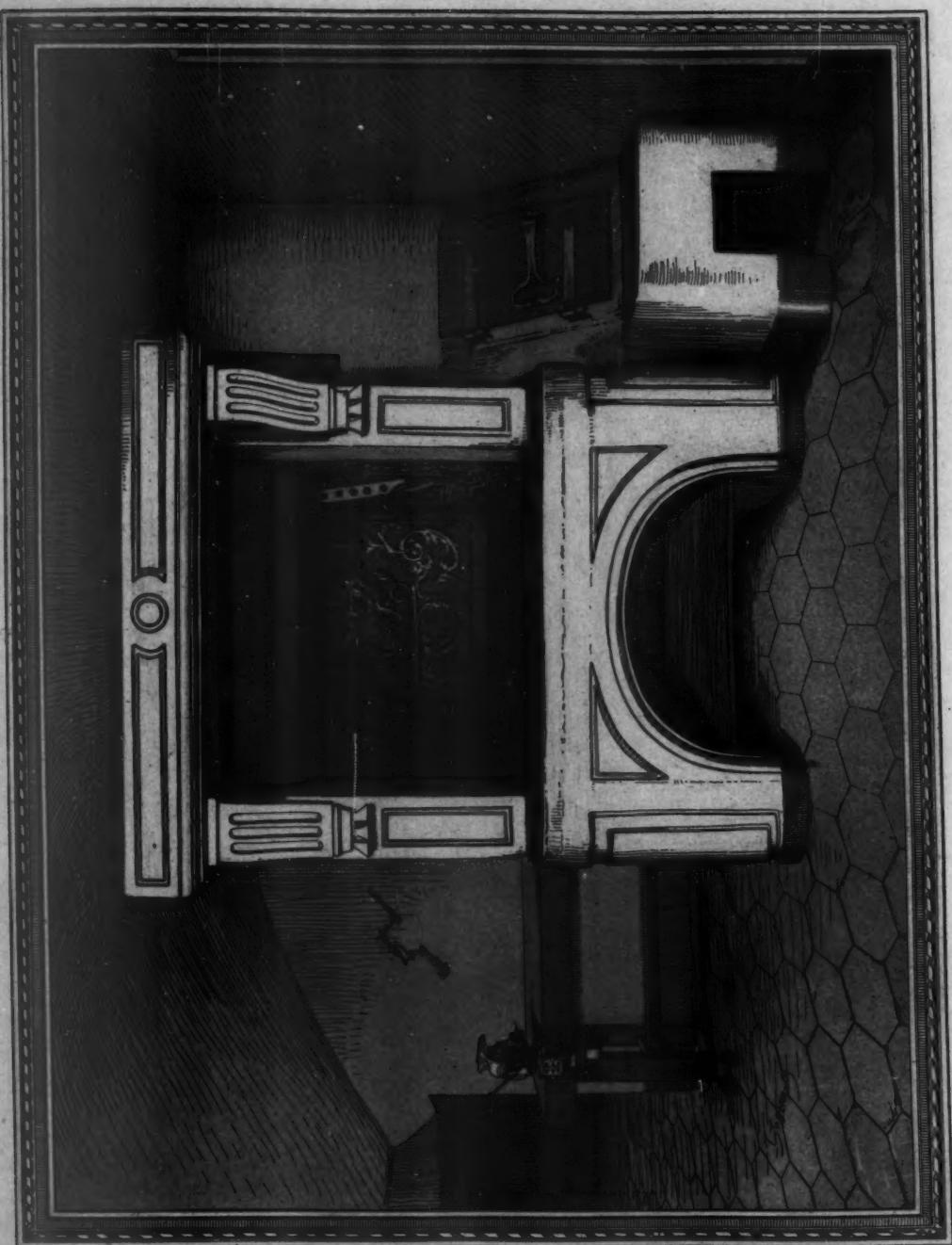
We may believe that "poor Berry" was not backward, and that he found in this atmosphere of feminine caresses a diversion from his lessons in fortification, his readings in ancient history, or the philosophical reflections of the Abbé de Radonvillers. It is said that he took to geography, and that very complex instruments manipulated in his presence interested him warmly; he wanted to disjoint them after the manner of schoolboys who take a watch to pieces; then he replaced them, reconstructed them, and invented improvements by instinct. This gave his teachers great pleasure; they followed him about, they listened to him; he wanted to make certain things himself, they gave him clever workmen to help him. His love for locksmith's work had come into existence, a curious, inexplicable passion, which at first gave pleasure, soon annoyed the people about him, and ended by irritating everybody. Louis-Auguste, the apprentice, surrounds himself with craftsmen, shuts himself up with them, acquaints himself with their life, speaks and acts as they do, listens to them because they do not resemble the rascally gentlemen who are about him. And he loves them for their openness, their wit, for a thousand things which astonish him; he drinks with them, a cry of "Shame!" is raised; he swears like them, M. de la Vauguyon is scolded. A day, however, came when only he could scold, for he was the King; then people held their tongues, or confined themselves to cavils and clever innuendoes, even, or especially when, by an excess of madness, he conceived the idea of building himself a workshop in the small suite of rooms at Versailles.

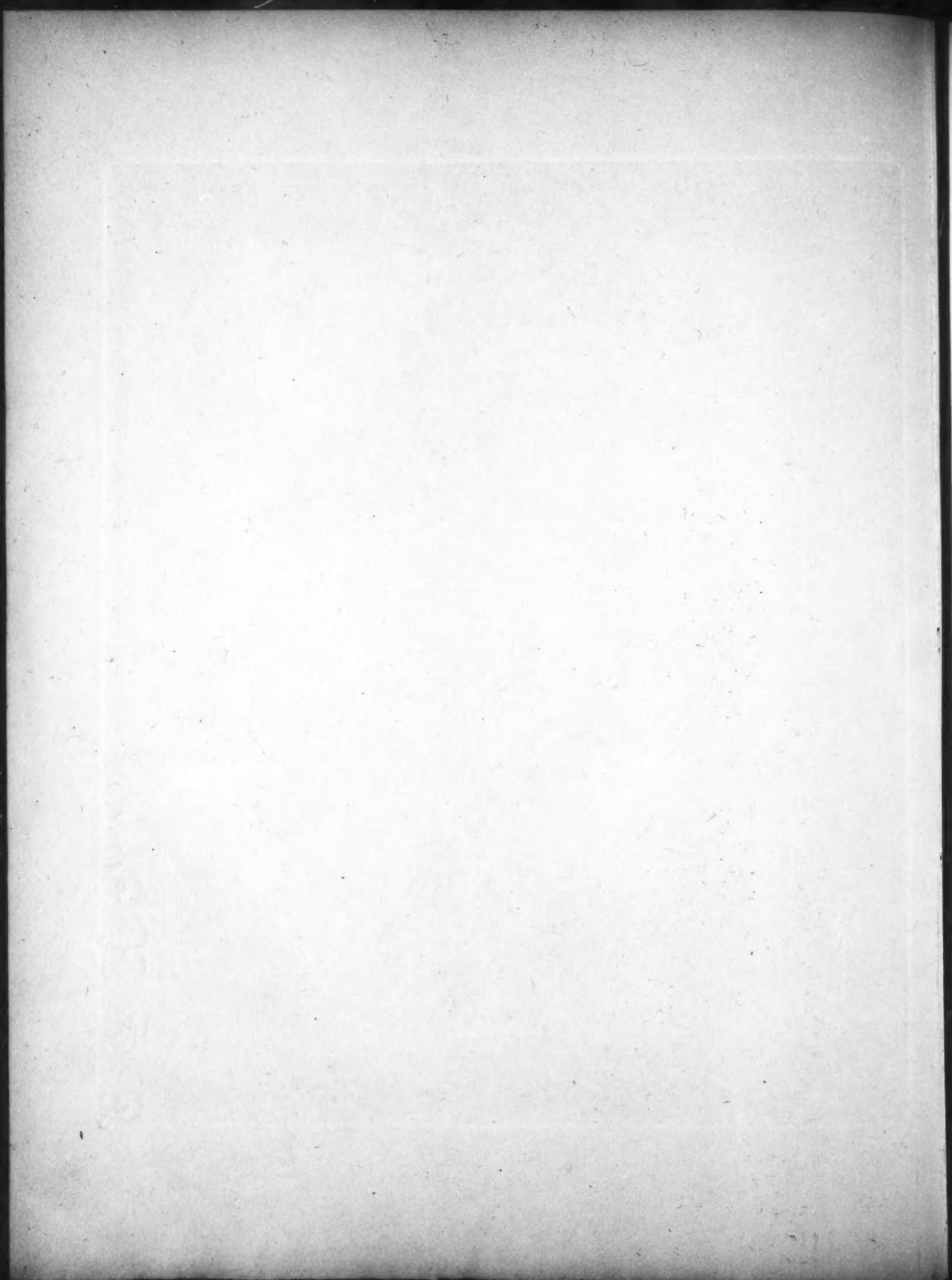
An attic without luxury, without gildings, an alchemist's laboratory under the tiles (which exists at the present day), with its forge of wrought-iron, its chimney, its hand-furnace, emitting very different sounds in its

loneliness to that of the tinsel galleries of the palace, something like the Trianon du Roi, a modest retreat where one hung one's silk coat and orders on pegs, so as to stretch a bit and to live at one's ease. Beneath are the work-rooms, a string of chambers without any regularity, three apartments packed with volumes thumbed and dirtied by black hands. Mercier, the author of the *Tableau de Paris*, went through these rooms with attention, and handled the King's English dictionary, on which thumbs had left their mark; he saw his desk, his scientific instruments, and on the walls useful drawings and out-of-the-way things, such as a likeness of the Emperor of China, a present which had come far and which looked amazed to find itself in such company. Everything there was arranged for work, as, in other places, it is for festivities or play. Few valets, few officials, a severe calm. Royal life may be gathered only from the rumbling of carriages in the court-yards, the calling out of the guard, the unceasing bustle of princely arrivals. And he for whom all this movement and excitement takes place, the man whose smile or word of praise people eagerly run after, is invisible for days together, his windows closed; even those who are in the secret can only just make out from the smoke of a little pointed chimney or the sound of an anvil vigorously smitten that the King is there, and that it would be useless to wait for him.

On certain days etiquette regains its hold on Louis XVI. They are his bad hours, his moments of *ennui*: "Bah! it's a sorry story being a king," he cries out when he gives himself up to his people to dress him. If he takes medicine, the whole Court makes its way into his apartments, princes and dukes in the front ranks, behind them in a powdered wig and with his sword at his side, a sort of gentleman who is never seen on any other occasion—"the officer of the throne." The King sends round this anxious and respectful crowd a sweeping look full of scorn.

Why is he not Gamain at this moment, Gamain the locksmith, who takes medicine at will, stays at home, and sees nobody? Because one has orders sewn on one's coat, keeps one's hat on, and has gold buckles on one's feet, because one excites the pity of every man, woman and child of one's subjects, one is none the less a man, a common man with his





weaknesses and ailments. Louis XVI has been bitten by the philosophy of the age; he begins to think that people mislead him, and the only thing of his royal state he preserves is the overpowering desire of sending these nuisances to all the devils below. If he restrains himself it is because his respect for opinion is very strong, and because his timidity drives back his sudden passion within him.

Once reconquered, he becomes impossible to manage; on the smallest occasion he breaks out into frenzied anger, he swears in a way to make one shudder. Neither the princesses nor the Queen herself are spared; Marie-Antoinette, so haughty, so smart, so worldly, irritates him by her remarks. Then it happens that the swarm of frivolous women and fulsome braggarts, his two brothers above all, procure him a reputation—"The King commits himself with common people, endures a thousand familiarities, talks shop-slang in a way that makes one blush." They forget that such speeches are not lost upon the world, and scraps of them reach ears interested in hearing them. Then arise quarrels soon made up, for timid men fear history. Louis XVI contents himself with contrasting his follies and those of his Court; if he has smiths at his side, he does not receive known scoundrels at his gaming-table or put up with their insults in pot-houses. It would be better if others resembled him who now fling away their crowns without much thought about the misery of the people; he mentions nobody's name, but in his famous "backhanders" about which the courtiers used to talk, his bite was found to be keen and his tongue cruel. The working-men, ah! they are the only ones who speak an idiom which is worth more than that of the intellect, and they are the first in sorrow and the last in joy. They are people of nature, who say what they think, who think aright, and are as well able as any one else to enlighten a king on the needs of his subjects.

When he suppresses Masterships and Wardenships he expresses himself *en compagnon* in his preamble, and the King of France, by an extraordinary delusion, believes he is fulfilling a social duty by working with his own hand. It has ceased to be what we should nowadays call "sport," a diversion, a healthy exercise, it is a sacred duty. Who knows rightly what the future has in store for the French *noblesse*, enervated,

ruined by debauchery? Bachaumont boasts of the foot-races, recently introduced, which might some day be able to give play anew to enfeebled muscles, but as for the "mechanical arts," those manual needs preached by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and lauded by the philosophers, how much more does their double utility force itself upon everybody, especially upon those who are happy in life, drifting fast to a dreadful future! See what the mallet and the vice and hard work have done for him! For the moment he is not far from dreaming of the revolutions which would lay him under the necessity of earning his living by the sweat of his body!

Sometimes he takes to rallying his brothers on their barren tastes, even or especially Monsieur, who piously collects rare things and precious knick-knacks bought at their weight in gold, and makes a show of them. During a visit to the Comte de Provence, in company with Marie-Antoinette, he handled playfully a certain Sèvres vase which the prince prized as the apple of his eye. He was then only Dauphin, and with that familiarity of manner which his brothers kept up with him, the Comte de Provence begged him to put the vase back in its place. Why should he give it up? What is there extraordinary about this object? And laughing and jesting all the time, he feels and turns the marvel all over, and finally lets it smash in a thousand pieces on the marble of the chimney-piece. Then was seen a sight rarely witnessed at the French Court—the younger son in a rage falling upon the elder brother of his house, upon the future king, his lord and master, and dealing him thumping blows; it was a savage encounter. The hardy and high-spirited Dauphin parried the attack, and answered it with all the skill of an approved blacksmith. Monsieur was growing warm from his foiled assault, and the Dauphine, in tears, standing between the combatants, tried to pacify them with good words and sorrowful remonstrances. She was on the point of ringing the bell; she refrained, for the honour of the royal family, for, says Mercy-Argenteau, she would have ruined Monseigneur the Comte de Provence for ever.

Somebody used the word "boor"—it was said to be the Comte d'Artois—and soon there arose a sham opposition party which wanted to divert

the young King from his violent exercises. Marie-Antoinette reproached him with his eternal hunting which sent him home tired out and helpless, and incapable of appearing at the evening receptions. Hardly returned from a long ride, the King would fly to his private table, shut himself up in his room and be at home to nobody. Next morning from dawn he would be at work, the files would grind, the hammers would be heard in the drowsiness of cosy morning slumbers; he would awake his neighbours and make the valets be at their places at the gates, thus putting out the most aristocratic class in a princely house. This excited people's imaginations, and it was disingenuously said that the King, who was so unwilling to let the great officers or the ministers approach him, had the private and secret doors wide open for tradesmen and coarse workmen who came to see him in their working clothes, and were insolent and talked as if the place belonged to them. There was fabrication and exaggeration, but the struggle had begun between the sovereign lord—the so-called autocrat—and the mob of courtiers. Treacherous tongues surrounded the Queen—if heirs were so long in coming the fault was certainly due to that life of physical exertion; one daring lady was in the habit of using a mythological allegory by saying that Diana and Venus were not in the habit of living on good terms with one another. Hence recriminations impatiently borne by Louis XVI; the Queen, flaming, pacing through the rooms talking of her mother, of the Austrian Court, where things were never arranged thus, pouring scorn and contempt on the extraordinary fantasies of her husband, he, laughing softly, trying to appease her, promising wonders, but in his heart quite different, irritated, and going away once for all and not coming back. Mercy-Argenteau used to know all about these quarrels; the little Queen would come and tell him of them in the innocence of her heart, and he would write off to Maria-Theresa long, sensible, cold, slightly impertinent letters, in which he described the extreme timorousness of the King, who was capable of taking offence or of turning cold and even—which might God forbid!—of something worse. The King is young, he is a man, after all; some evil persons, wishing to ingratiate themselves with him, knew how to tempt him; there is a story of a certain Mademoiselle Contat, a great beauty, who by the merest chance

one day found herself in the prince's way. Doubtless that was all, but nothing but the busy and tiring life which he had imposed on himself could have saved him from shipwreck.

When Louis XV was alive, Marie-Antoinette's opposition had shown itself more imperious and more unmanageable. Isolated as she was in what was to her a new capacity, still very much of the Austrian lady and of the woman (in the good sense of the word), she conceived quite a different idea of marriage. She was to be seen like a middle-class matron, sitting at the common table, playing the part of Sancho Panza's doctors in respect of the Dauphin's redoubtable appetite, forbidding certain dishes, putting her veto—her veto, alas!—on plans proposed, insisting on the Dauphin's presence, and brooking ill the harsh exigencies of etiquette. If we may believe Mercy-Argenteau, the Dauphin and his wife get on very well together, they love one another but, verily, the future King has very strange whims. When he leaves his apartments it is not, even at this time, to give himself up to study, to confer with statesmen or to learn a little about public business, but to interview the architects of the palace, to criticise their designs. "He always has something new to be done in the house. He himself helps the workmen to move materials, beams, and paving-stones, and after devoting himself for whole hours to this toilsome work, he goes home more tired than any journeyman."

His great aim was to look robust, to "score off" the coxcombs about him, to return, perhaps, to feudal times when the kings of France moved deftly in their burdensome armour. A pleasing fancy, but rather out of place in a prince who wore a powdered wig and a silk coat! Marie-Antoinette showed him a little crudely the sad anachronism of his ambition, and the big boy, like a stupid, went away genuinely sobbing. But after the manner of the vacillating, the most stubborn of all people, he would go back to his hard tasks, and by degrees the Dauphin drew himself away, found compensation outside, and dogmatized less. One thing above all others put the Dauphine beside herself—it was the dirty, thick red hands which the hammers gave the Dauphin. One day she made a stinging remonstrance to him about them, before Madame Campan; Louis hung his head; words came to his lips which he had the sense to keep to himself.

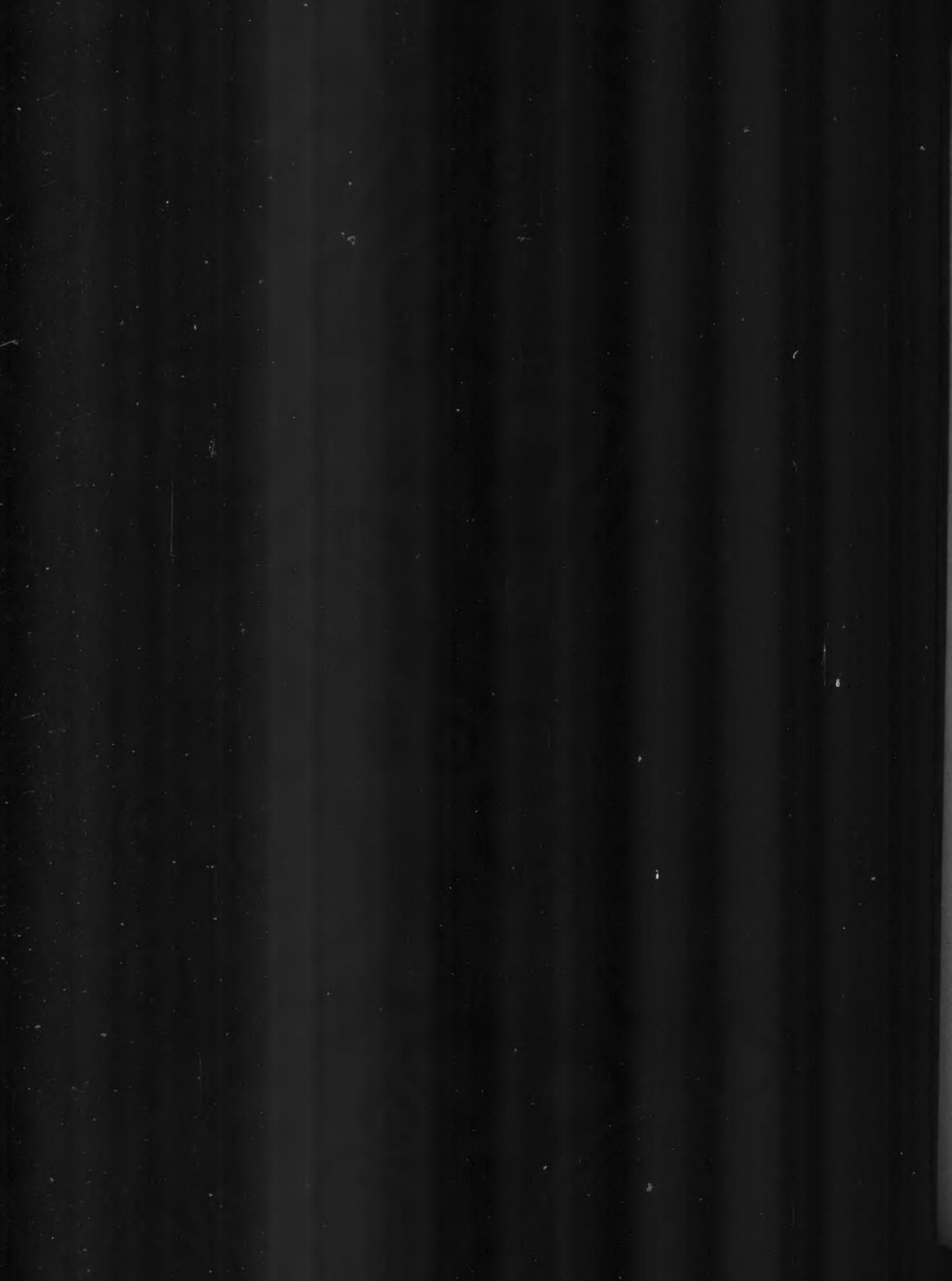
Moreover, what was the good of these rebukes? The young lady has her Court, her pleasures, her friends, whom she treats as she likes; is he alone not to be able to live according to his whim?

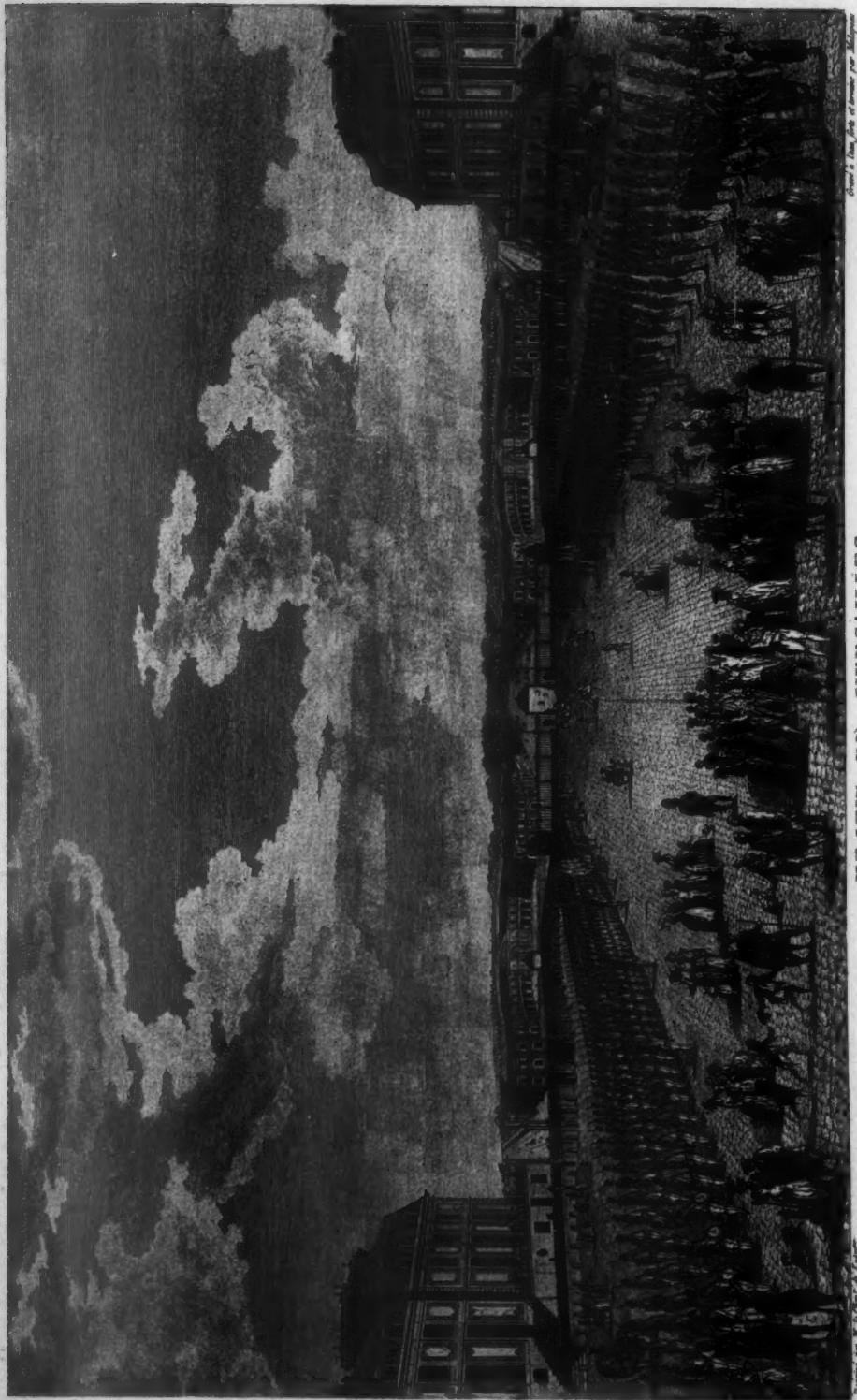
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"Poor man!" said Marie-Antoinette in an unfortunate letter; and this phrase marks the disdainful period when the Queen no longer gave herself the trouble of chiding, lived a life apart, exiled herself to Trianon, played at being a shepherdess, as the King did at being a locksmith. Between that pair indifference has come; they are old married people who respect, but do not cultivate one another. To the Parisians, the Queen is "the Austrian," a featherbrain, a foreign woman; the King a great heavy man, without convictions or ideas, more troubled about his table and his wine than about the government of the country. With the playfulness of a pretty woman, the Queen eagerly makes fun of him in the little *coterie* of courtiers; she calls him her Vulcan, with a smirk, without thinking that calumny is busy with this theme, without dreaming that smart applications of her remark suggest a Mars in the tale. Even years ago, by means of a letter to Rosenberg, which has frequently been condemned, Marie-Antoinette gave the rein to her cutting criticisms. Her tastes are not those of the King, "who only has those," she says, "for hunting and manual labour. You will agree that I should cut a sufficiently poor figure by a forge; I should not be a Vulcan, and the part of Venus might displease the King much more than my tastes, of which he does not disapprove." It is in this vein that she comments on and ridicules "the poor man." Mercy-Argenteau is startled, the Empress chides, the future Emperor, her brother, blows her up in good sort. Pshaw! It is all very well for them to talk in that way, but if her Imperial mother has sent her to France to be the companion of an architect or a turner, she has done wrong; a daughter of Austria has a right to expect better things.

What is Louis XVI doing in the chaos in which Europe finds itself? Do you imagine that he gives audience to his ministers, that he states his will to them and hears their opinions? Not a bit of it; does this English officer who is presented to him with so much mystery, come to

give him information as to military operations? Is he a spy charged to disclose a State secret to him? Wrong again; when the King hurries from Fontainebleau to Versailles in great state, with relays at great expense, it is indeed for M. de Maurepas that he leaves home, but he goes especially to superintend the fitting up of a wing of the palace destined for the minister; he makes a point of being there, to test the locks, to examine the casements, to keep the architects at work. As for the English officer, it is pretty well the same story; what was troubling him was a model of a polished steel sword, the manufacture of which had been described to him, and which he examined on every side for days together. At the most critical moments he had to be sought at his forge, and moreover, he only lets in with reluctance his two brothers, who are allowed to enter without being summoned by him. He is discovered besmirched with coal-dust, ruddy with fatigue, out of breath, blowing the fire, and beating iron, in a shed full of workmen, by no means too respectful, with half-empty glasses on a bench, perhaps even pipes, all the litter of hurried work, all the bustle of expected orders. Poor man! it is a fair occasion for saying so; these workpeople whom he protects, whom he loves, in whom he places his confidence, will betray him when the evil days are come, and in a cowardly way will make him pay for all his delicate attentions. His chief *valet de chambre*, Thierry, who knew the people he had to deal with, tried to warn him against his infatuation. He insisted on these men coming to the palace by night, to make them less pompous and familiar; but Louis XVI showed astonishment. "Do not keep me from the people," he exclaimed sanctimoniously, as if he guessed the recantations of the future, the acceptance of the Phrygian cap, all the weaknesses and all the miseries. Like a good servant, Thierry did not lay aside his armour; more of a royalist than His Majesty the King of France and of Navarre, he kept up a resistance to "Messieurs the furbishers," prohibited their meddling with certain things, and stopped their pranks. One day they were keeping the feast of their fraternity and thought of offering a bouquet to their royal comrade, but, from fear of Thierry, they applied to him to present the flowers. He dissuaded them from their design. A thousand good reasons occurred to him which the banqueters deemed





gravé à l'eau forte et buriné par M. le R. P.

IV^e VUE DE VERSAILLES,

prise de la Grille qui sépare la Cour du Château d'avec celle des Ministres

A. P. D. R.

N° 22.



to be specious. At their first meeting with the King they spoke of their regret at not being able to approach him to decorate his button-hole; Louis XVI questioned Thierry; after considerable hesitation, and respectful refusals to answer, the *valet de chambre* plucked up courage, and ended by admitting that he had feared for his master the melancholy results of his indulgence. "It was, Sire," he said, "because however honourable that kind of occupation or amusement may be, it offends the general sentiment as to the sort of pleasure a king should take."

Criticism coming from above would have exasperated Louis; on the part of a valet it seemed to him worthy of notice. He saw that a regular opposition had been formed against his bent; so then, the small fry carped at it, perhaps his friends the locksmiths laughed at him too. These thoughts moved him more than the disdain of the Queen, more than the commonplace banter of his brothers; he was less regular at the bench.

A legend which arose among the lovers of old books attributes to him the honour of a work on the locksmith's art, published in 1781, under the signature of Joseph Bottermann of Tilbourg. It is a thoroughly technical and matter-of-fact treatise, the work of a master, in which the author passes in review, by the aid of plates, all the infinite combinations of keys, padlocks, and flint-locks then in fashion. Feutry is supposed to have translated the book for the use of Frenchmen, but this borrowed name hardly conceals the royal incognito, which is now admitted. By dipping into this neat folio, it is easy to understand Louis XVI's passion for the famous "technical arts." He did not laugh—this most puissant prince—and did not take the matter as a joke; throughout there are theories extremely complicated, Chinese puzzles enough to make the bravest shudder. He discusses, he compares, he even invents. If Gamain, the Versailles workman, coached him in all this, Gamain was not a nobody, but did honour to the Guild of Master Workmen.

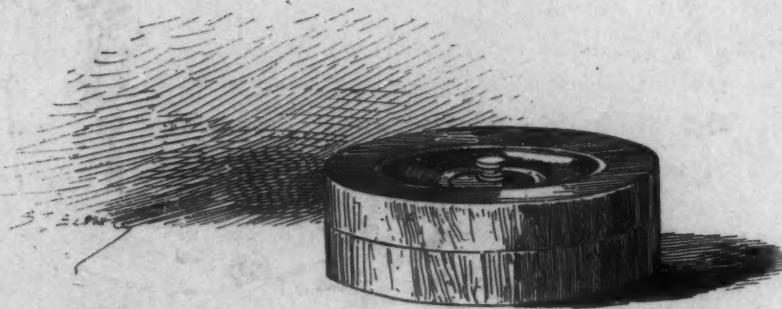
But though for a time he abandoned practice for theory, Louis XVI had no greater pleasure than, from time to time, to take up his tools again; and when there was pressing need, when it happened that nobody could be found in the palace to fit a key, to oil a bolt, with what joy

did he rush with his box, throw off his hat and coat, turn up his sleeves, and begin! Here is the amusing adventure of which Cléry, one of his *valets de chambre*, was a witness; he used to tell it with pleasure to show what a good fellow "the poor man" was, how gentle he was with the humble, how simple, and merry, and inoffensive with everybody. The Queen, Marie-Antoinette, lively, nervous, and a little excited, wanting to go from her apartments to those of the Princess Royal by the private corridor, broke her master-key in one of the locks, and as she had closed the door behind her, she was a prisoner in the passage, obliged to call out, and to knock at the doors, without much chance of being heard. By good luck, Cléry saw her from the Cour des Cerfs, with her hands passed through a small window making signals of distress; he ran up, forced open the door and made a passage for her. Meanwhile, some other valet had gone to tell the King what was happening. Laughing good-humouredly, the King had gone over to his forge, had taken some necessary tools, and he came up just at the moment when the Queen was leaving her cage. "Madame," said he, "I am going to mend the accident." And as the corridor was dark and night was coming on, he asked Cléry to light a candle so that he might see what he was about. While he was picking the lock and taking out bolts with the utmost gravity, his head sunk in the shadow, back comes Delmas, a servant of the royal chamber, who had been sent to look for a locksmith. Noticing the King in his shirt-sleeves, and taking him for the workman expected, he came on stealthily from behind, and hitting him a stout blow on the shoulder : "Halloa! papa!" he cried out, "we have been wanting you badly." Astonished, the King darted back, but when he saw the terrified look of the poor man, and Cléry's consternation, and when he understood the mistake, he could not help laughing heartily. He laughed the more because Delmas nearly fainted from terror, and stood quite pale, with his mouth gaping, choked by emotion, and nailed to the wall. While he rubbed his shoulder "marked by the fleur-de-lys with five leaves," Louis begged the Queen to help him in administering comfort, which she did with much grace; both went up to the unlucky man, assured him that his rather coarse joke should have no bad consequences, and went away, the Queen to her

daughter, the King to his smithy, where he passed the rest of the day, happy in having shown his talents in public, in having convinced the Queen of his knowledge, and in having been taken for a craftsman by a *valet de chambre!*—one of his purest joys amid his daily cares as an absolute monarch.

* * *

During the time of depression which had followed on Thierry's strictures, Louis XVI had not been inactive; he tried to turn wood like his grandfather; he constructed slight things in ebony or box which were given away as mementoes; opinion was with him, he was keeping up the family traditions, everything was going for the best. The "Musée des Souverains"



preserves one of these "frivolities," to use the phraseology of that day, a little round snuff-box with an ivory knob, pompously dignified by the name of a casket by the donor, M. Elie Petit, which does small credit to its maker. Besides, was this box made by the King? It had been stolen from the Tuileries, out of the royal cabinet, on the day of the Tenth of August; a Sieur Maëlrondt had got it, and had sold it to M. Petit; this was all that could be said about it. In such a matter probabilities are nothing, and proofs are always wanting. How many tongs, and bad locks, and keys of all sorts, go about the world with the same traditional stamp, which have not a more certain origin!

A little print, very badly done, almost a caricature, shows Louis XVI

drawing in the light of two candles—another of the King's talents and one which was not known. This time we have some reason for faith. Doubtless his fancy did not carry him to the picturesque; his mind harmonised better with plans than with precious vignettes, witness the coloured drawing of the fortifications of Landau "according to the second system of Marshal Vauban" signed "Louis-Auguste, 1766," and preserved in the collection of prints in the National Library. Once he ventured on originality in company

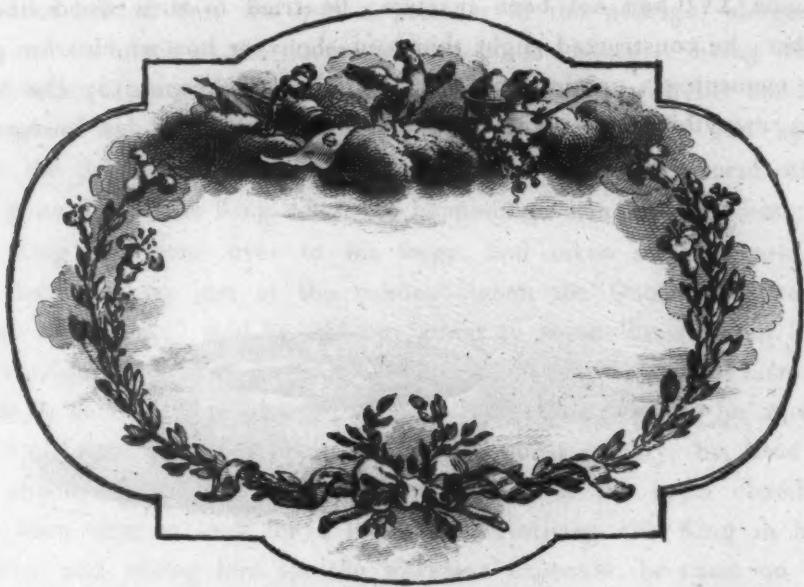


Plate engraved by King Louis XVI. (This proof is printed from the original copper plate.)

with Nicolas-Marie Ozanne, the engraver to the Admiralty, who was attached to the princes' household, and charged with teaching them how to handle boats on the waters at Versailles. He wanted to engrave on copper a hunting map of the forest of Fontainebleau, intended for his guests. This brought him back by a roundabout way to locksmith's work, for the fashion was to trace with *aquafortis* decorations and figures on the locks of guns. He engraved in this fashion a middling *cartouche* adorned with fleurs-de-lys and birds, of which one or two proofs copies were printed, and which old Ozanne preserved in memory of his pupil. Since that time this plate has travelled;



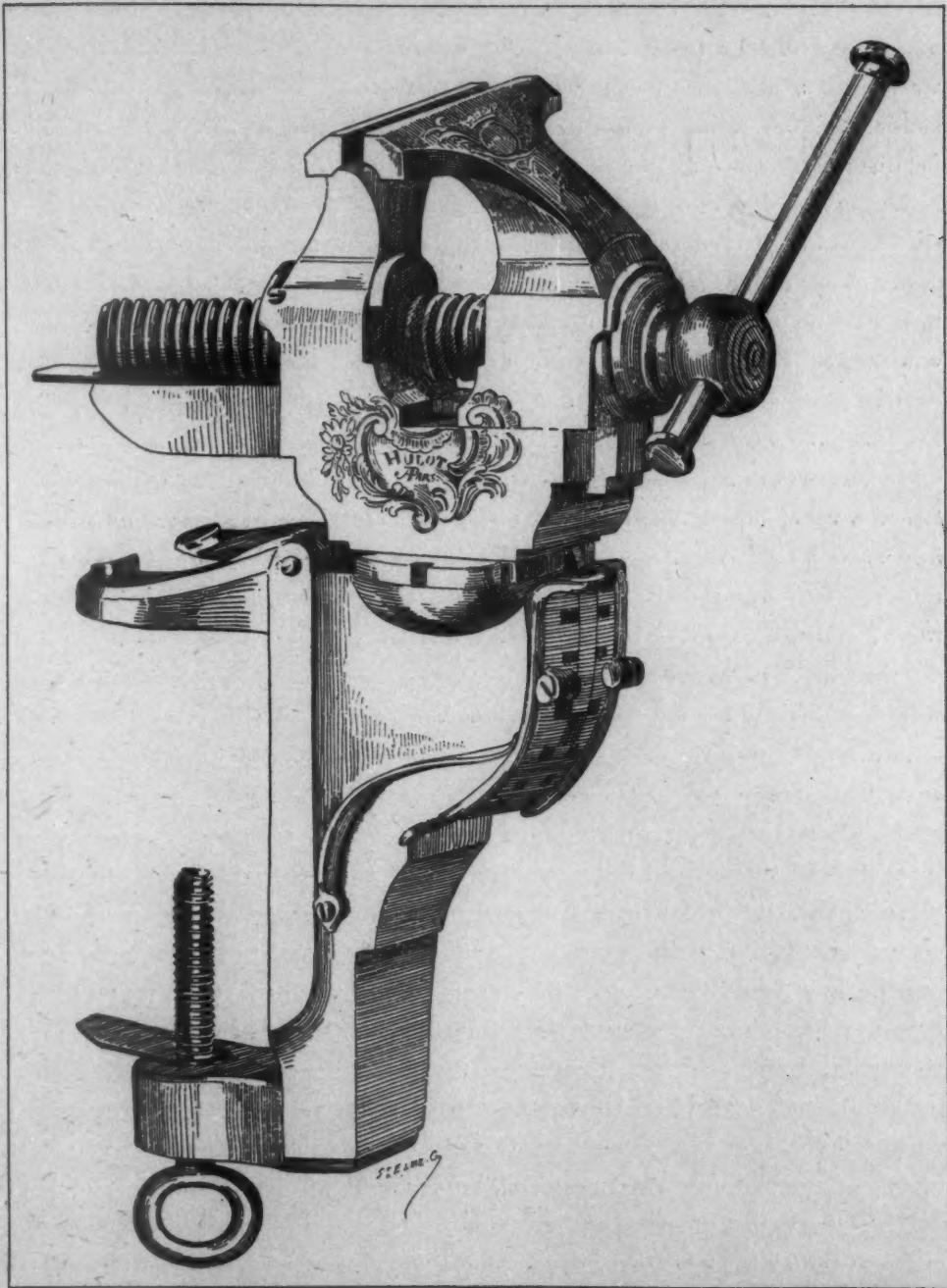
it passed from Ozanne to his niece, Madame Coissy, who deposited a proof from it in the Royal Library, with this note in manuscript : " Plate engraved by King Louis XVI under the directions of Ozanne, and presented by his niece, Madame Veuve Coissy, in 1833." The original plate did not have altogether the fate of Callot's plates, which were beaten into saucepans, and turned into warming-pans by order of Madame de Graffigny; but it went long journeys; it came back to us from Germany, and it is from that very plate, from that restored waif, that we have taken the vignette which figures in the middle of the opposite page. Souvenirs have remained from the Versailles workshop which are at present preserved in the " Musée des Souverains : " the vice mounted on copper and ornamented with delicate engravings, offered to the Louvre in 1852 by the painter Eugène Isabey, and the centre-bit which came from M. Boucher de Perthes. This last implement had a history, and its owner recited it in his letter of presentation. " This centre-bit," wrote M. Boucher de Perthes, " was found on the death of Louis XVI in his locksmith's workshop ; it was, it is asserted, forged, turned, and polished by the King. This instrument, given in 1796 by the person who took it to my late father, has since then been preserved in my family."

" The person who took it ! " Do not conjure up a tale of virtue, do not think of some heroic act of devotion on the part of

an old retainer of the royal house, secretly making off with a relic, and taking it away under his cloak at great risk of perishing ; this filcher of stray articles was Gamain, the King's workroom companion, who had become a magistrate of the Commune of Versailles. For a long time Gamain had deceived Louis XVI for his own purposes ; he had got into his confidence by pretending to think like him. When the King, harassed by the first popular agitations, questioned his fellow-workman, the latter bent down and made him believe in his unbounded devotion. It was part of "the poor man's" destiny, not to be able to read faces, to judge men from himself, to mistake the worst of knaveries for delicacy of feeling.

After all, what is he reproached with ? He loves the people, he allows them to approach him. He even seeks them from choice ; he is ready to do whatever is wanted for them ; he shares their toils, he has driven the plough, turned wood, beaten iron ; it is certain then that he does not despise humble folk. The worst thing would be were those whom he flatters to find fault in their turn with him. Happily it is not so ; Gamain is always charmed to go to the upper rooms ; he is a man, is Gamain, almost a friend, a loyal fellow in whom trust can be placed. In the quiet of the workshop Louis lowers himself to expound his humanitarian theories to him, to speak of the Third Estate in very kind terms, in order to recover his halo. He calculates that his companion will go and diffuse some of his ideas below and make them known. It is the usual move of the timid and the weak, hardly expected in the grandson of Louis XV, the lineal descendant of Louis the Great. Already, through the open windows, have been heard the dull murmurs which breathe of revolution and danger, and when the hammer strikes the anvil, he smites more feverishly ; the work tells of his preoccupation ; in vain are written in his note-book in the hour of trouble phrases of indifference and the mention of an unsuccessful hunting and shooting party, in vain does he assume a laughing, impassive face at the Court suppers ; in vain does he receive Gamain with unchanged good-humour—gaiety is no more.

Some days after the taking of the Bastille, in the confusion of thought and will, Monsieur wants his brother for an important communication ; he has him sought for everywhere in the palace, without thinking of the forge.



Brass mounted and engraved vice, found in Louis XVI's locksmith's workshop. (Musée des Souverains.)

A valet saying that the King was there, he went up in haste, and found him busy forging iron bars for the window of the workshop; near him was Gamain bending his great body, and giving stroke for stroke. The sudden arrival of the Comte de Provence, out of breath and with his attire in disorder, allowing the echo of distant shouts to come in with him, raised in Louis XVI a nervous, inextinguishable smile, out of proportion to the occasion. He offered his brother a glass of wine, playfully, and with an assumption of nonchalance, "to get his custom" he used to say. But this was no time for laughing! When Monsieur, after many supplicatory winks, had succeeded in drawing him on to the balcony, right at the top of the roof, and had shown him from there the people assembled in the avenues, the crowd growing every minute, the streets blocked with carts and horses, the gates of the palace closed, the guard under arms, Louis XVI changed countenance. But his confidence remained unshaken; his work was going on well; with wise reforms, with clever temporizing, those people might more surely be sent home than by hustling or charging them; the law was on his side, and that gave him courage. The Comte de Provence shook his head. Truly the iron rail forged by the King would probably be necessary for him one day, a day not far off, alas! a day which the voices below were prophesying in their ominous songs and their thunderous clamours.

Had Gamain, then, told his fellow-citizens of Versailles nothing, since they showed themselves the most determined? There are things absolutely inexplicable, terrible gaps in our knowledge concerning these movements of the people. Through the hot August nights the menacing songs are heard, they beset the palace, they seem to come from underground, from below stairs, from the barracks, from the park. There are misunderstandings, passing errors; doubtless the King desires nothing which the people do not desire; he knows their hard suffering and he respects them, despite their vagaries. Gamain would say so, Gamain would testify to the fact readily, Gamain knows his master's express will, his plans, and his desires.

Now mark the oddness of the thing; this artisan but yesterday boastful and self-sufficient, who treated everybody haughtily, who entered the palace by the great door, slips in to-day sneaking along under walls, goes inside by

private staircases, avoids meeting any one, and sometimes makes a difficulty of answering the calls of the King. An amusing story, ye gods! And a fine modesty! Did the smithy displease even the Third Estate, the smiths themselves? Ought it to be more politic to encourage jockeys, to patronize gaming-hells, to live like Sardanapalus, than to file keys or to put locks together? This is how vile charges, caricatures come from England and spread in France, turn this serene passion to derision by obscene allusions. In one of them there is the forge, the royal workshop with its furnace lighted, at which the devil is blowing; servants bring a gold vessel which the Queen smashes on the anvil, and the King moulds into her effigy. At their feet is the Dauphin holding a sceptre formed in the shape of a carrot and drivelling into a streamer issuing from his mouth : "Leave me this plaything at any rate!" "And me," cries the Queen, "three suppers a week." By its greater humility the King's petition shows that his hobby caused laughter even abroad. He will give up all and everything provided hunting is left him, and "some bits of iron for rainy weather." Thus this idea fondly cherished, of attracting to him the plebeians by copying their manner, imitating their talk, and parodying their crafts, had had this result!—a miserable coloured likeness, come from the other side of the Channel, thrown to the four corners of France, at which Gamain perhaps was the first to laugh.

For this man plays in the final tragedy the pitiable part of the informer, of the traitor paid and fondled by him whom he betrays; when the King was obliged to leave Versailles in great haste, leaving his workroom, his tools soon to be stolen and dispersed, his optical instruments, and his books, all his quiet life, his calm *bourgeois* existence, to go and plunge into the revolutionary furnace, Gamain had miserably deserted and disavowed him. Forgetful of his fortunate situation near the King and of his former royalist leanings, and the better to emphasize his perfidious democratizing, he had remorselessly made a *volte-face* and violently espoused the winning side. Gamain is the envious workman, the worst of scamps, as anxious to be a somebody as Louis XVI could be to seem a workman. Versailles once rid of the tyrant, when the patriots could raise their voices, Gamain was seen parading in the front rank,

taking care to be seen, and making piquant revelations. It even happened that the King did not know until the last day the change which had come in this quarter, and in his greatest grief the thought of the locksmith Gamain passed before him like a vision of happy days. One day he had need of a trusty man to build him a secret closet in the Tuileries, a cabinet where he might deposit his valuable papers and important documents; it was Gamain whom he chose and whom he sent for specially at night, so as not to arouse suspicion. That miserable person came at the appointed time, perhaps owing to some remains of respect, perhaps with the secret desire of picking up information and turning it to account for malicious intrigues. Later he will lie, when he comes to the Convention and boasts of having made the iron cabinet after the flight to Varennes. How could Louis XVI, who came back as a prisoner never let out of sight, watched even while he slept, openly hammer a metal door without attracting attention?

The truth is, that Gamain was called in during the last days of 1791, in one of the rare moments of calm which the Court had; that he kept quiet for a year, waiting on events, seeing what would happen. He sold the secret at his own time, at the exact moment when the King, shut up in the Temple, was in a bad position for defending himself and convicting him of lying. With an air of great simplicity, with tears in his voice, and as one who held a terrible and burning secret, he narrated to the judges of Louis XVI the existence of the famous cupboard, without adding a word more. By a strange irony the worst blow dealt the King came from this inoffensive little nook, from his forge, his harmless mania, from that which he feared least of anything in the world; his working "mate," his *protégé*, his friend almost, signed his death-warrant.

Some mysterious power had seized on the wretched spy, he no longer belonged to himself. The patriots of Versailles elevated him, raised him to a pinnacle. If Louis Capet had paid his debt to the nation, the honour thereof resulted entirely to Gamain's revelations. He was dazzled by the glory of his triumph, he grew talkative among the crowd, but in his reflections, when he returned to himself, his conscience appeared to him black and ugly. His legs tottered, his features were covered with wrinkles, he would

shiver as if he had the fever. Then to explain these ailments and to avoid telling the cause, he had to invent new lies; if Gamain is old before his time it is because the King wanted to poison him to get an awkward witness out of the way.

Listen to the monstrous iniquity got up after the event; Gamain has finished the iron closet, he is very warm, the King offers him a glass of wine as of old at Versailles, he drinks it at a draught in the presence of the Queen, who is no longer the haughty princess of the Trianon, and who takes an interest in the job. It is at night; Gamain must get back to Versailles. He leaves the Tuileries with his head sunk, somewhat drunk and staggering. On the Cours la Reine terrible agonies throw him down in torture; he calls for help. Some kind-hearted people pick him up and take him away. Three whole days he is at death's door; he would be lost were it not for the help of a surgeon who gives him a strong counter-irritant and saves him. The thing happened on such and such a day, at such and such an hour, Gamain is exact, he cannot be mistaken, thank God! But notice how the best memories go wrong, and how the brain as well as the stomach was affected by the King's wine! At the moment fixed by him as that of the awful crime of which he was the victim, he signed the minutes of the Commune of Versailles, he signed them the night before, he will courageously sign them the next morning, doubtless amid the convulsions of his agony. No matter. Certain citizens interest themselves in him, and among them is an old soldier of the body-guard, Peyssard, who also wants to have his past forgiven, and Musset, a redresser of grievances, an enemy of Capets of all kinds. Help is demanded for Gamain from the Convention; he is spoken of as one cut down in his flower by "the sinister designs of the Austrian Locusta." What this tried patriot, this good man, wants is a pension to enable him to care for his infirmities. Look at him, he walks with difficulty, his back bends, his knees fail, he has aged ten years in a night.

And the remorse which he cannot confess, the Convention pays him for at the rate of twelve hundred *livres* a year, without haggling; a new Iscariot to be added to the series.

Since then serious men have taken these abominable calumnies literally

without giving themselves any further trouble as to the absurdities and contradictions.

Paul Lacroix has shown us, in a famous little book, Gamain become "a person of private means" playing dominoes between an usher of the Court and a notary in the recesses of a wine shop in his native place and telling his "tenebrous" odyssey to all comers. The writer may easily have known him, for he makes him die late enough under the first Empire, still pensioned by the nation, still disabled by the poison of the King, and still deserving.

Nevertheless, there was a little mishap capable of reducing the finest phrases to nothing! In the first months of the Directory, Gamain, seeing affairs take another course, reaction coming about, patriots losing their head, and his pension seriously threatened, quietly extinguished himself with the calmness of duty done, having scarcely enjoyed his income for a year. The thirty pieces did not bring him better luck than they did the other—

HENRI BOUCHOT.





MINOR PICTURE SHOWS IN PARIS

I



personal reminiscences, written by a man of keen insight, is more precious in our eyes than the strongest efforts of imagination, and the sketches of a sincere observer appeal to us more directly than the laborious inventions

One of the distinguishing features of these later years of the century is a horror of conventionality, universal contempt for "the regular thing." Artificiality has had its day, old-world formulas bore us, and one and all, whoever we may be, critics and public, literary men and artists, the same craving for novelty possesses us all, and the same thirst for the real consumes us. A page of per-

of Academic art. We prefer, too, the smaller picture shows, less crowded, and at the same time less exclusive, to the unwieldy exhibitions which the month of May brings, in which school works preponderate, and where good and bad are hung indiscriminately—though here and there a noisy petard explodes which, in a calmer atmosphere, would miss fire.

The special advantage of a limited collection, whether it be the result of chance or of mutual selection, is that the straining for display is out of court, and that talent may reveal itself in every variety of aspect, with the special charm of sincerity. We delight in sketches dashed off with spirit, water-colours washed in on the spot, small canvases on which the artist, with no eye to the public, has plied his brush with a free hand and made himself quite insolently at home with nature. In these genuine studies the artist's temperament asserts itself, and his natural instincts, released from all restraint, come out in their original simplicity.

This is not meant to imply that it is only in the minor exhibitions that we meet with honest work. Such a statement would be obviously exaggerated; but they predominate there, and that is the point. Artists know to their cost that at the Salon a weary public hardly ever looks into the rooms where pastels are hung, or where water-colours pine on the walls; they know that the crudeness of broad daylight reigns there unmitigated, and that tender tones, subtle effects, and soft and learned harmonies are drowned out by the glaring harshness of surrounding works and the falsifying effects of cross-lights. So they meet in the club galleries, where some of their best work is often to be seen, or in the rooms of private Societies, such as that of the French Water-colour Painters.

One day, about ten years ago, I found myself at the first exhibition, in the Rue Laffitte, of the small group of artists who at that time had been fascinated by the transparent brilliancy of water-colour work. The associates were few. At this day they are fifty, they were then but seventeen; but among them were Madame Madeleine Lemaire, MM. Heilbuth, Detaille, Harpignies, Vibert, Eugène Lamy and Lewis Brown. There were others, and masters too, who added to the brilliancy of the show; but one after another, and prematurely in most cases, their names have vanished from the list. It is many years now since we saw Jacquemart's

accurate silhouettes and bright sunshine, Doré's Alpine landscapes, Louis Leloir's delicate miniature-work, Isabey's dazzling and fanciful scenes. The Society, which at first was strictly limited, is now rejuvenescent, and has enlarged its borders, perhaps too widely. The expenses were heavy, the committee were afraid of sameness in the exhibitions, and looked about for greater variety; the squadron was enlarged to a battalion. Enriched already by the new names of Besnard, Zuber, Duez, Jeanniot, Gilbert Béthune and Boutet de Monvel, the Society yet hoped to add to its wealth. The circle was extended to include men of proved talent in oil-painting, but timid in the freer realm of water-colour, and shy of betraying their inferiority; and with even less judgment, to inexperienced recruits, who are numerous indeed, but whose presence involves it in some danger of losing its prestige.

Take it as it is, however, and it is an interesting show. If there is some padding, there is also some very choice work, and if it is open to criticism in detail, as a whole it is unique. And yet the absentees this year are many. Neither Français nor Cazin have exhibited, nor Benjamin Constant, nor Jean-Paul Laurens, nor Bonnat; nor even some of the regular force, Madame Lemaire, Duez, Detaille, and Boutet de Monvel; Lewis Brown and Béraud, though their names are in the catalogue, failed to send in their works, and others, at the eleventh hour, made polite excuses. The absence of so many of the high priests of the temple where water-colour is in its glory, is, of course, to be regretted, but the solemnities, thanks to the zeal and fervour of the minor brethren, are conducted with no less pomp than usual, and the faithful have flocked to the sanctuary in greater numbers than ever.

We may follow them, and shall have no reason to regret it.

* * *

In no class of art is water-colour applied with happier effect than in landscape. Sky, earth, and water—next to woman, the three most changeable things in the world—are the only elements in the picture, but no treatment is subtle enough to render them, and the rapid handling and confident execution indispensable to water-colour make it the only

medium fitted to seize every fleeting hue, and to record every changing aspect. It is this extreme delicacy, this light-handed dash, and the impossibility of correcting, of softening down a discordant wash of colour, or of restoring due importance to a detail too weakly wrought in the first instance, which makes the interpretation of nature by means of water-colour an art of the highest subtlety, and of exquisite and supreme grace. In less time than it takes us to describe the act, an artist will have sketched in pencil the scene before him, have outlined the features of the land, the larger buildings, the masses of foliage, and with skilful manipulation will have washed in on his paper the stronger contrasts of colour in fresh and delicate tints.

This is the process carried out with amazing sureness by MM. Harpignies, Zuber, Gaston Béthune, and Yon; but though their practice is identical, each preserves his individuality, his native accent as it were.

M. Harpignies' mastery is no new thing; his powerful style and sober handling have long delighted the public. No one better than he, understands the relief of knoll and dell, or how to project against a saddened sky the fantastic contortions, the slender or gnarled trunks, the haggard and wind-wrung limbs of forest trees. Petty detail has no charm for him, he cares only for general effect; but that he indicates with uncommon breadth, and his masses have a tragic and stately dignity. Some critics have been very hard on him, regarding his style as conventional and premeditated. For my part I do not see that conventionality is so conspicuous in his work. Certain preferences may no doubt be discerned in his choice of subjects, and a marked delight in the grander aspects of nature, but the impression produced is always one of absolute sincerity. Look at this landscape, entitled "November," its infinite breadth of sky and heavy storm-clouds lifted above a stretch of wooded scrub with a gleam of vivid rose on the horizon. Through the chesnut trees, whose branches stand out black and bare against the sky, we feel the bitter wind, the cold and dismal herald of winter's chill; the sensation is piercing and unforgettable. M. Harpignies is a master in this key, and he can utter in it harmonies of the sweetest sadness. In him we have an admirable draughtsman and a colourist of accomplished skill; a foe to glaring hues, devoted to subtleties of tone,

and always ready to create a difficulty for the pleasure of laughing it to scorn.

Not less brilliant is M. Henri Zuber's brush. Every time he exhibits we mark some fresh advance, and the variety of his scope is amazing. He goes from forest to sea, from Provence to Paris, from the flowers of spring to the snows of winter, without betraying any weakness. Paris especially, this year, has been the mistress of his choice, and has inspired him well. The view of the Pont de la Concorde and the Seine, with the open square beyond and its tall colonnades is a very capital drawing; I doubt whether water-colour can be used with greater skill. The Seine slowly rolls its blue waters under a bright spring sky, broken here and there by fleecy clouds; the bridge on the left casts a greenish shadow on the river. In the foreground a fisherman in a boat is casting his sweep-net, under the other bank gleams the scarlet hull of a steam-tug; on the bridge, above the parapet, the top of an omnibus is visible, loaded with passengers. The scene is skilfully composed, capitally drawn, and admirable in tone. It is full of air and light, everything keeps in place. Nothing can be more solid, more aerial, or more truthful.

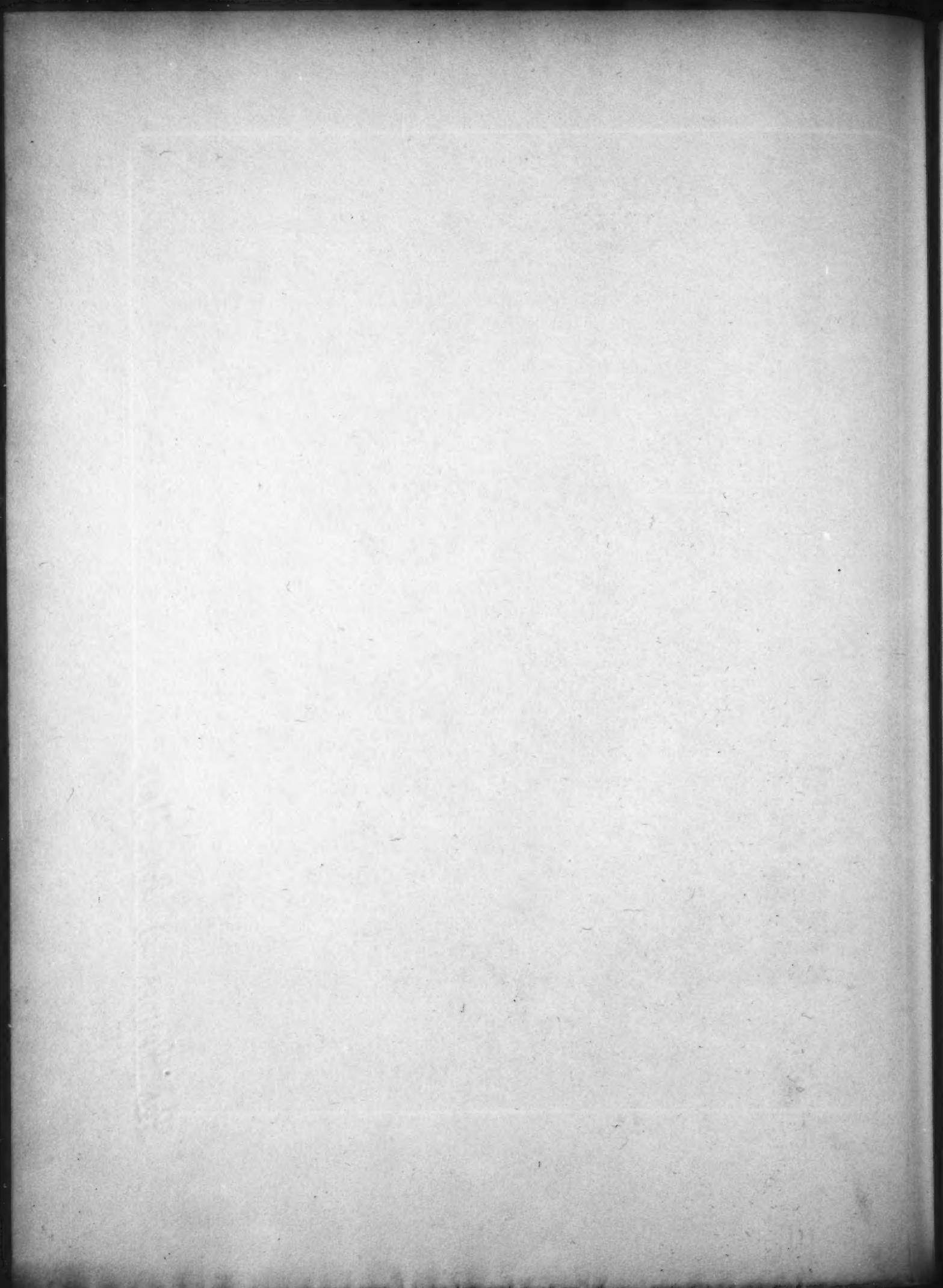
Among twelve examples sent by M. Béthune it would be hard to choose. Never, in the three years that he has been exhibiting, has he shown to greater advantage; never have I seen him work with greater facility, or broader freedom. He has, before now, brought us gusts of hot air and sunshine, and the play and sparkle of light from Provence, calm waters and vaporous evening glow from Venice; power was what he lacked. Henceforth he has wiped off that imputation. "The banks of the Creuse at Fresselines," "Evening on the Creuse," and "A Valley in the *brandes*," reveal an artist undaunted by the sterner aspects of nature, and with all the means of rendering them at his command. There is firmer accuracy in the drawing of the soil; relief and distance are expressed with triumphant decision, and the scale of violets he has lately adopted veils his landscapes with a delightful haze of mystery. As to the verdure of spring and autumn—in these he has long excelled, but it strikes me that he has succeeded better than ever in the "Park of Saint-Cloud" and in the "Eaux-Semblantes." Here we have a dark blue pool lying unruffled in a dell formed

by two walls of rock. The pale gold of the autumn foliage carries the eye up to the fading sunset sky. Both are perfection.

M. Yon's daring innovations have at times caused me some anxiety; this year I feel reassured. His use of indigo is no longer an abuse, he has diluted his greens, and his colouring, though still intense, is infinitely less violent. No tender harmonies for him; he has lost, or he never had any notion of them; strong impressions are what he seeks, and an acute pitch, fiery reds, vivid yellows and blues, more intense than in nature; but what a blast he can blow on his brass, what triumph he sounds. The drawings he has brought from a summer trip to Cahors are blinding; the sun of the south dazzles our eyes with its myriad reflections! Note the recently patched walls of the mills, the red tiles far or near, the roofs more or less brightly new, the earthenware flower-pots, the heavy dahlia-blossoms—what a concord, a chorus of red! From the tenderest rose, through gold ripening to orange, to the wanton flash of vermillion and the truculence of crimson. Although his skies still have a reminiscence of the heavy handling we have seen before, how rich they are! I like this "*Château de Mercuès*" with its stern outline, high on a steep slope, this "*Old Mill at Cahors*" with the dulled or vivid reds of the bricks, and the deep blue of the river, and this delicious view from the cliff road of some village, shut in by a green hillside sprinkled with bright-hued cottages and veined with the white ribbon of a dusty highway.

M. Heilbuth, on the other hand, is faithful to delicacy of tone, and treats it with consummate mastery. To render with aërial translucency the tender hues of spring foliage, he has elaborated a process of his own, partly in transparent washes and partly in body colour, and the dexterity of his touch is quite bewitching. His workmanship is minute and patient, and exquisitely sensitive; the beauty of his greens, the lucid quality of his pools, the gradation of his distances are familiar beauties. He is at once a landscape and a genre painter, and delights in introducing figures into a scene derived from nature. Here, two lovers lie on the fresh grass, their eyes gaze into the distance and they are lost in silent reverie; here, on the skirts of a wood, old and young men are carrying to the poor





of the village the comforts they look for. Here again, a bevy of fair ladies are seated on a wooden bench, and their white dresses gleam against the changeful green of the shrubs; in another picture, a corner of the lordly terrace whence the inhabitants of Saint-Germain look down on the valley of the Seine and see its hundred wanderings at a glance, a young girl on her knees is fondling a little dog who is quite indifferent to her caresses. The grace of these figures is invariably charming, and in every part we may discern a delicate observation of tints, and happy touches of colour skilfully toned down, giving evidence of learning and experience seconded by innate and unfailing taste.

M. Max Claude is a sober soul; he loves effects of calm; we never catch him at those dashing tricks which captivate us in M. Yon, M. Béthune, M. Harpignies, and M. Zuber. But his art, though more dexterous, has some very happy moments, and the water-colour he entitles : "In the Park," with its tall avenues of trees and a sky still luminous with the radiance of a dying sun, gives a strong impression of truth. I may add that "A Spring tide" is also one of his soundest pieces of work; no one else whom I could name renders the fury and rush of waves with such a supple hand, the lumps of water dashing on to the sea-wall, and the clouds loaded with squalls which come sweeping down and drench the land with fine rain.

The early attempts of M. Georges Claude are interesting; there is no lack of talent in the view he has brought home from the Riviera, "A Church ruined by an Earthquake," an "Old Street in Mentone," and a study of a lad standing on the bottom step of a stone stair-way. His best piece of work is a "Sabot-maker" sitting at work and hewing out a wooden shoe in the full light of a window. This shows some curious effects of daylight in a very delicate scale of greys. But his work is unequal, his skies are often heavy, and his foliage no less so; the distances lack tone, and the architecture fails in accuracy.

Inexperience is M. Georges Claude's chief failing; not so with M. Victor Gilbert.

He, almost alone among water-colour painters, combines subtle harmonies with vivid hues. His dexterity is amazing, whether he paints

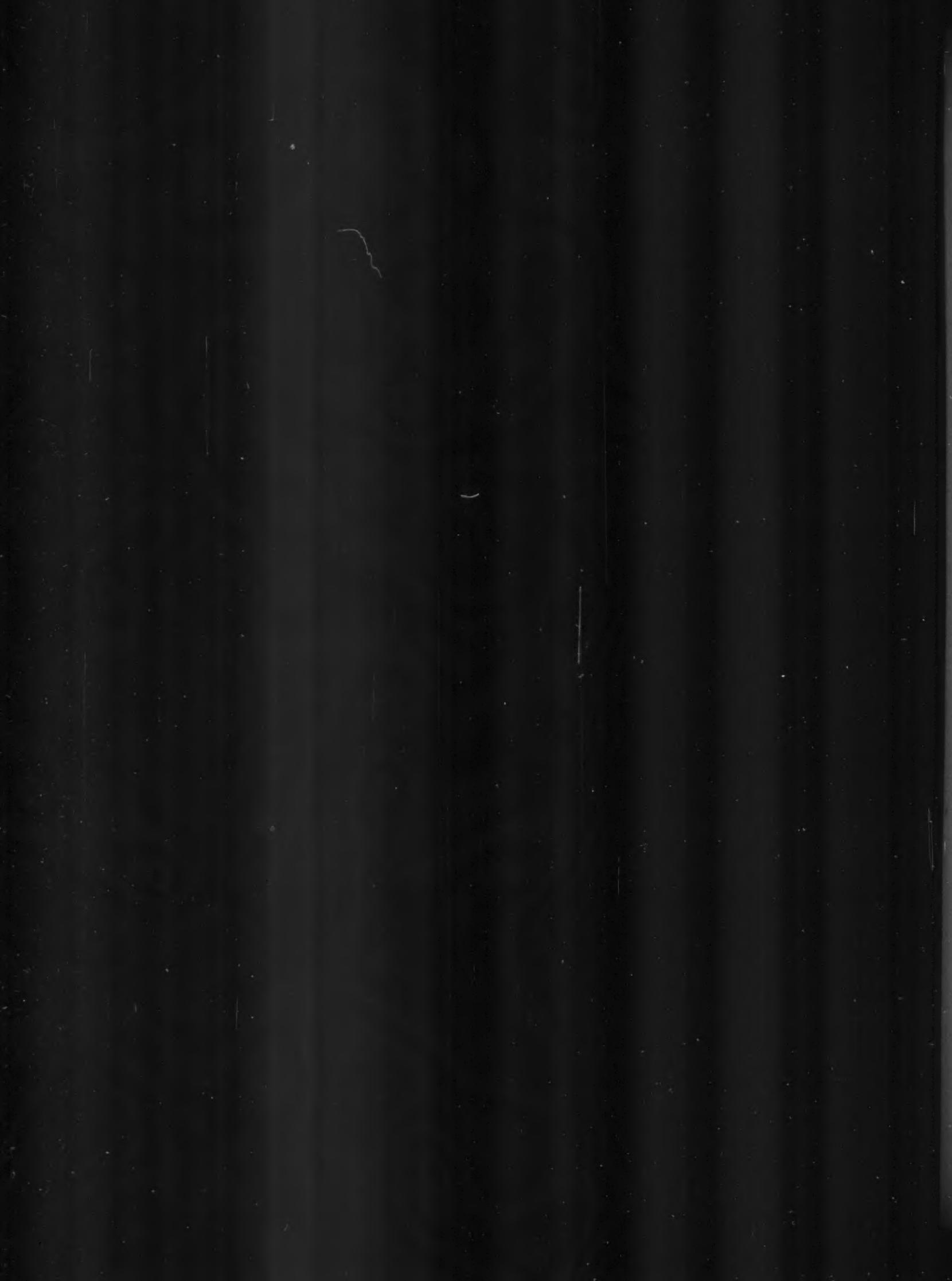
roses, or gives us the little story of a troop of young girls pillaging a field of poppies under the watchful eyes of guardian Sisters, or shows us a washerwoman on her knees with sleeves rolled up, on the sandy bank of a running stream, or depicts the interior of a chapel and the dressing of an altar for the "Virgin's month." Not only is he a supreme draughtsman, but, without weakening his palette, he detects every faintest shade; his colour is always rich, but always delicate, and the astonishing dexterity of his manipulation is worthy of the keenness of his eye.

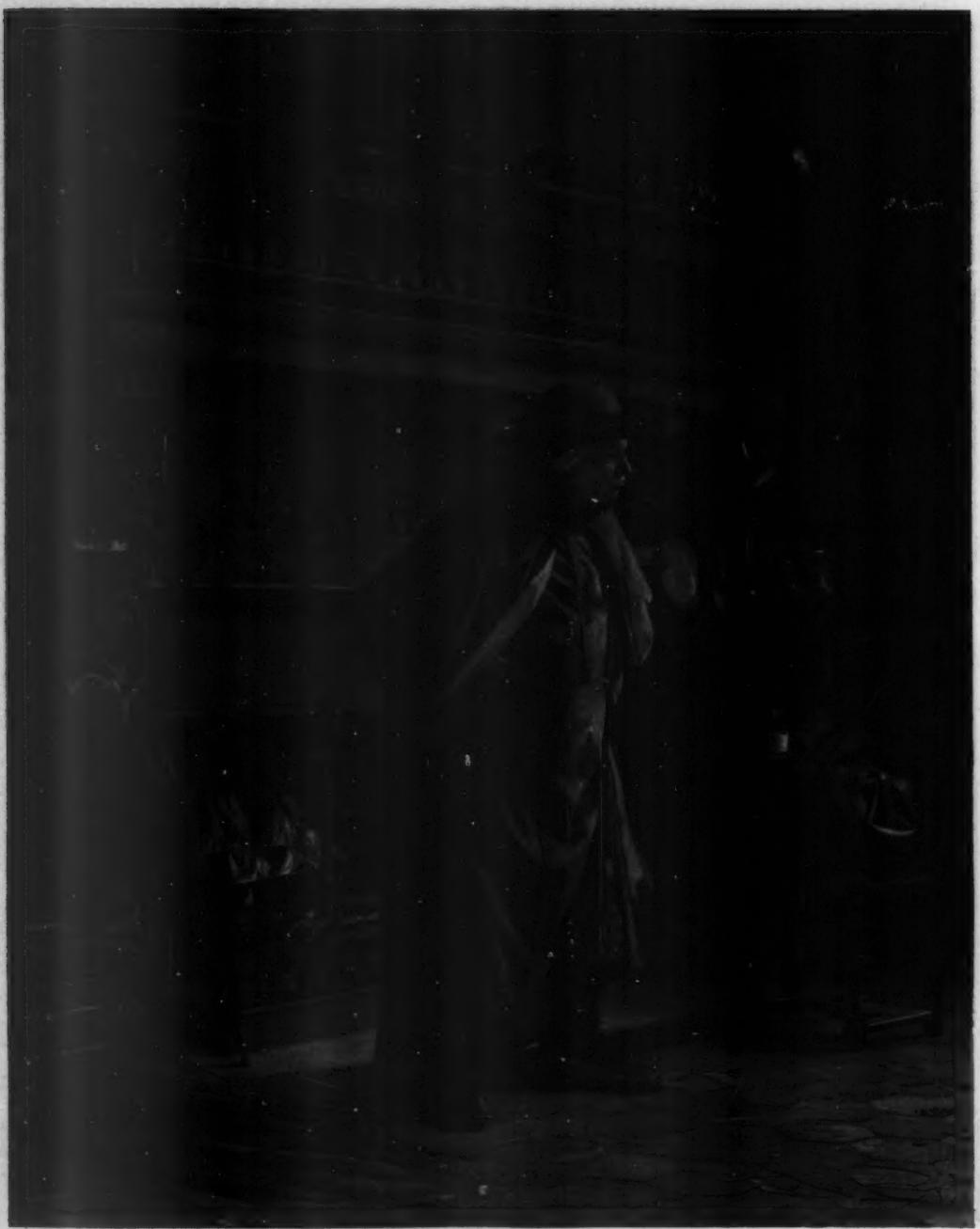
Three years ago M. Morand dawned upon the Rue de Sèze with a painting of roses, with a very remarkable study of the "Interior of Saint Mark's," and with a "Court-yard in the Bargello" which Jules Jacquemart might have acknowledged. This year he gives us only flowers, but those flowers fully satisfy us. Branches of apple-blossom in an earthenware jar enamelled green; pale-hued roses in a square glass bottle; parti-coloured poppies in a basket; fat bunches of red roses wrapped in white paper and lying on a table; and these apple-boughs, poppies, and roses, broadly laid on without hesitation and with absolute certainty, are neither more nor less than miraculous. M. Morand has returned in triumph.

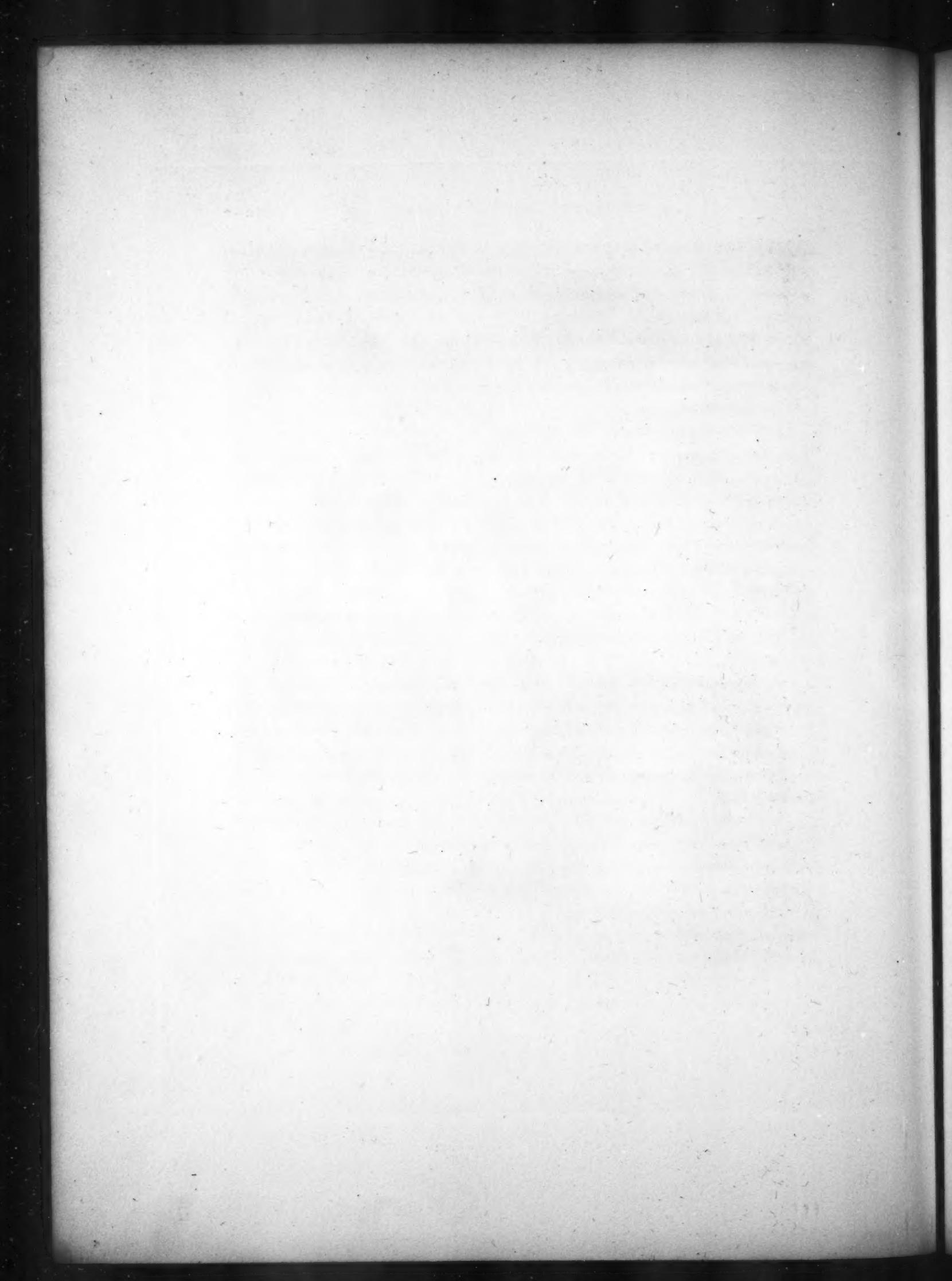
M. Georges Jeanniot makes but a small show, but his pictures are delightfully original. His soldiers studying a railway advertisement, and two interiors, a man at a stove and a lady in an arm-chair, are the work of an ingenious mind. His "Relay" is of a rarer quality. By night on the suburban Boulevard a lad stands holding the change of horses for the next omnibus. He is a miserable creature, and the grey steam which shrouds him gives a singular aspect to his pitiable face. The colour is exquisite, the feeling genuine and piercing; quite enough to stamp the picture as a great work in spite of its minute scale.

M. Friant is a new-comer, but not unknown outside these walls. Last year he exhibited a series of small portraits in oil which were highly appreciated; full of individuality and unpretentious originality. In his water-colours we find equally painstaking workmanship and no less penetrating insight.

Two of them, indeed, are quite remarkable: "Reading the News" and "Sophie." In the first, a woman with faded features and grey







hair, in a white cotton bed jacket, is quietly reading the paper; in the second, a girl of the streets, with a weather-stained complexion, in a black gown and blue apron, is smelling at a yellow flower. Another girl with chubby cheeks, about to bite into a slice of bread and butter, is perhaps a little inferior in execution; but the background, the strip of clear sky shut in by heavy black clouds, the quiet river flowing under a high-arched bridge with a village on its banks are harmonious and pleasing.

A similar note is struck by M. Adan. There is no sweeter picture here than his little "Milk-Girl" of six, trying to hurry with her milk-pails, which are too heavy for her baby arms. This is the best of his rustic scenes, and the landscape is pretty, full of light and air. The others have little charm beyond their truth. A rural postman in a blue blouse standing in a wide-open doorway hands a letter to a fresh and rosy matron; a little boy is stooping to sling a stone at a bird in the field, while a shepherdess watches some sheep; a tall and graceful girl stands on a chair in a garden on a sunny afternoon, gathering grapes from a vine. It is a honest, frank, and real painting; neither vulgar nor mawkish.

M. Adrien Moreau is faithful to the picturesque costumes of a past time, but the figures who wear them stand in honestly studied landscapes. I particularly remember a study of a garden without figures, and a delightful composition—a hollow way in a birch copse with a young woman sitting on the grassy slope; nothing more delicate and truthful can possibly be imagined.

M. Vibert varies his subjects very little; he worships cardinals, and is never weary of their blazing crimson robes. Every year he paints them with more masterly vividness; every year he gets the most marvellous effects out of them. He is as fertile in resource as Ulysses was of old; and though he sets before us none but prelates, at any rate he contrives to place them in every variety of attitude. We have seen them at dinner, out walking, and in conclave; the latest of them is travelling.

While the horses are being taken out of his chariot, he has made

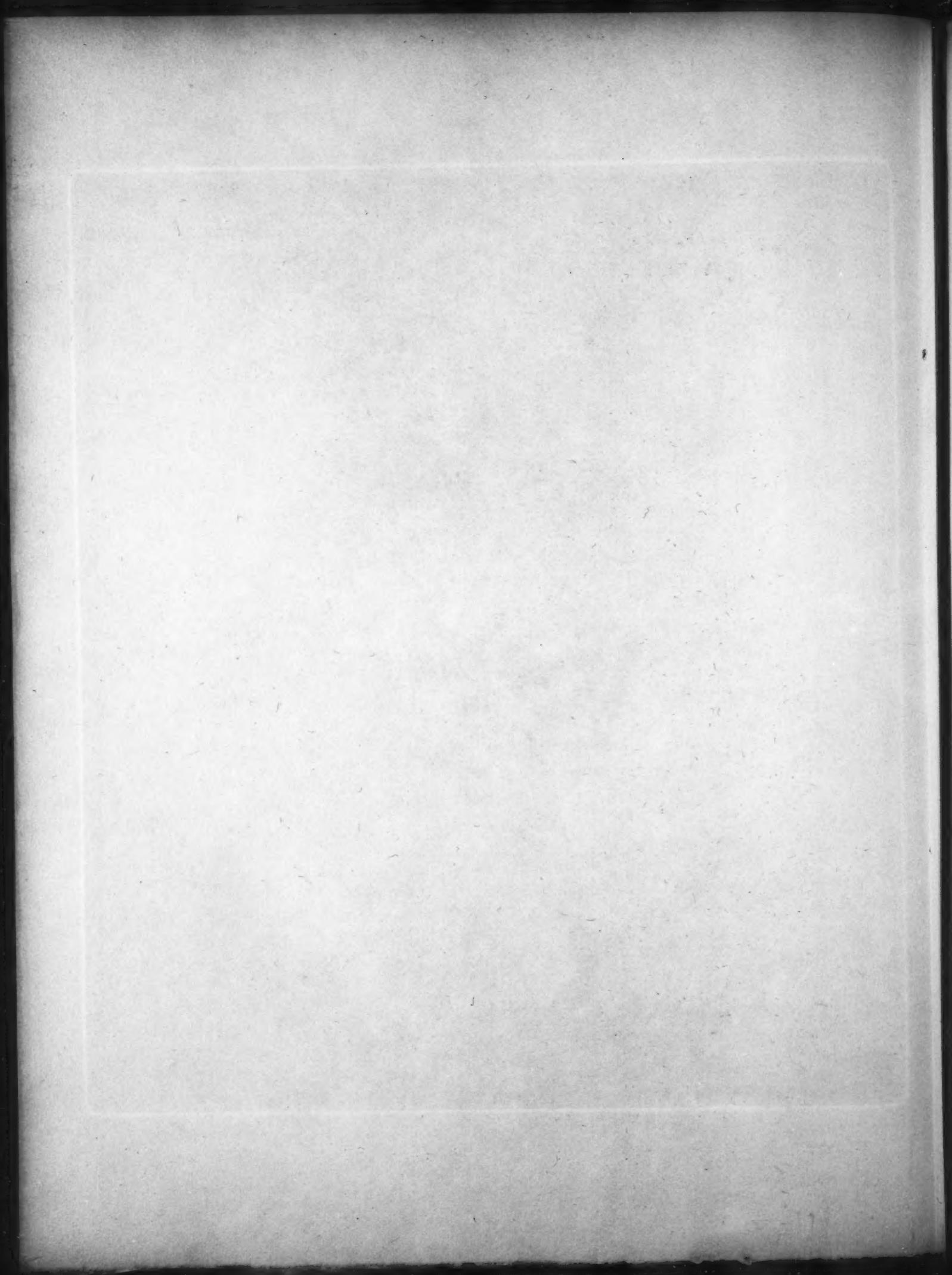
his way into the inn—a very snug looking inn, upon my word, with a superb chimney-piece, a hearth filled with blazing logs—and is standing with his back to the fire toasting his lordly back and substantial calves.

Near this picture hangs another, of a sacristy where a dashing Spanish damsel has vowed to make the innocent father confessor shudder, and by the scared face of the young priest there can be no doubt that she has succeeded. The scene is masterly; so is another, an illustration for a new edition of Boileau, in which we see the starveling poet Damon declaiming sonorous diatribes against the vices of the day, to the rage of a flock of geese which he has disturbed.

M. Lambert has the monopoly of cats; M. de Penne, of dogs; but the dog not being a drawing-room pet—excepting those miniature specimens in which ladies delight, and of which we here have a specimen, "Miss Fennec," pensively enthroned on a fine blue cushion—M. de Penne's sitters are displayed among more various and realistic surroundings. Though several of these spaniels and hounds have the stamp of portraits, the artist has not felt bound to set them all in the same scene. They have sat for him in the open air, in the varied scenery of nature. Poplars and birches, oaks and beeches, stand in groups, mingling their boughs in the background; gentlemen and beaters in coats and shooting-jackets come out of the brushwood, and these motley hues are precious to so dexterous a colourist as M. de Penne. The silvery grey of his skies, the tender gold of his foliage, the floating mist over his rivers, compose a characteristic range of scenery and place his work very high in the estimation of the best judges.

I have kept M. Besnard to the last; his nude studies have made a sensation. These life-like sketches are worth all else to those who have a keen feeling for beautiful things; they are drawn by a fervent colourist whose powerful naturalism is purified by unfailing good taste and a poetical and agitating mystery. In these fair or brown creatures, whose bare flesh is irresistibly charming and whose blue eyes soothe our fancy with an impalpable caress, while the amber shadows might move the envy of the tea roses that lie on their bosoms, we have an incarnation of woman with





her feline grace, bewitching langour, and fallacious promise of never-ending delight.

They are not all alike, it is true, and the one called "Ave Maria," with its violet shadows, has a genuine breath of devotion; but this is the note of M. Besnard's work as a whole, and the intentional lack of "subject" intensifies the impression.

Nor must we fail to note the views in Venicé of Madame Nathaniel de Rothschild, M. Worms' "Sevillana," M. Maurice Courant's sea-pieces, and M. Maurice Leloir's fan-mounts, genre scenes, views in Switzerland and Savoy, and an elegant study of trees by a pool.

"Difficulties of Paris Life," and "A Serenade," by M. Charles Delort, are clever vignettes; his "Souvenir de Hollande" is something more and better, because more original. M. Roger Jourdain sends some views in the Park of Saint-Cloud, and of the ruined Palace, which cannot be too highly praised; the sunlight is brilliant, the skies clear, and flowers, gaudy or empurpled, chequer the green lawns and the darker verdure of the grove with vivid hues which are never crude. Then again there is sound art and plenty of it in M. Paul Pujol's contributions; "Lapidaries" is full of sustained effort lavished on a commonplace subject, and the "Church at Baudéan" is a powerful work, soundly and carefully executed; but why in his "Return to the Studio, Rue de la Paix," has he tried his hand on a subject which M. Jean Béraud would have handled so well? He was without a rival in architectural studies, and we hope he will come back to them.

* * *

Now let us go on to the show at the Artistic and Literary Club, vulgarly known as the "Cercle Volney."

Here we have a good collection both of severe and graceful works, alike sound and thorough. In portraits here are two masterpieces, one by Jean-Jacques Henner, and one by Jules-Élie Delaunay, in genre two exquisite pictures by Lucien Doucet and Dinet; in landscape a melancholy dreamy scene by M. Jean-Charles Cazin, and a decorative and showy piece—but showy in the right way—by M. Alexandre Nozal; in pastel some

exquisitely delicate colouring, for which we have to thank M. Laurent-Desrousseaux and M. Iwill. These are the cream of the collection.

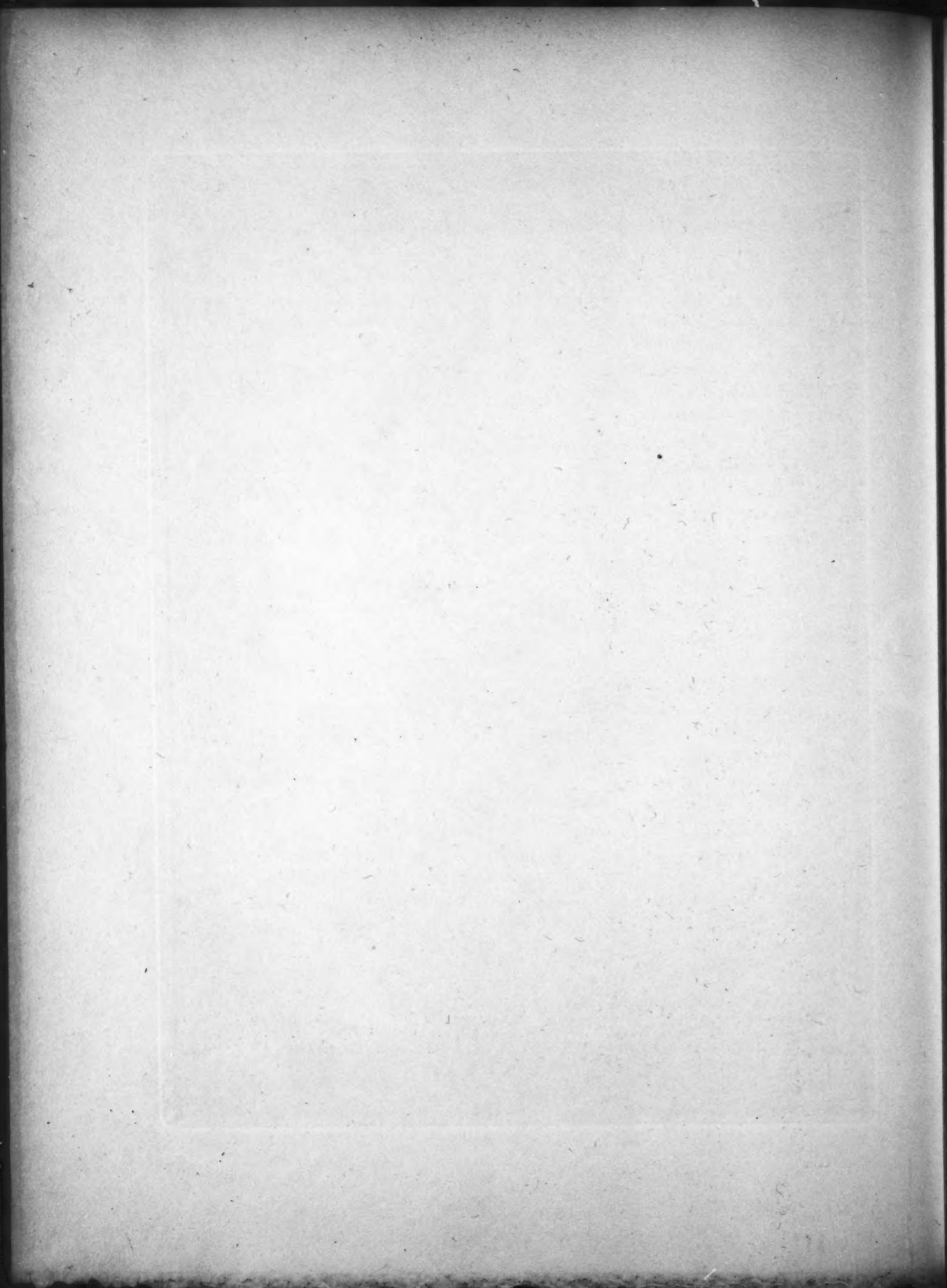
M. Henner's portrait is of an old man. The physiognomy is a singular one; a high broad forehead, quite bald, but not pallid, and a prominent chin with a fine grey beard are the opposite extremities of a concave segment of a circle; at the bottom of the hollow, as it were, under a thick growth of eyebrows, glow a pair of eyes full of youthful fire and gentle kindly humour. The nose, like the nose of Socrates, is flat and snub; there is a smile on the lips, slightly parted under the drooping moustache. The presentment is frankly vivid, harmonious in treatment, of course,—and inconceivably rich in tone.

M. Élie Delaunay's work is above all things manly; still there is no lack of delicacy in his dexterity, and he conceals or displays his strength according to the character of the sitter, indulging or restraining his gift of "dash."

He has given it the reins, not without some touch of coarse workmanship, in the portrait of a man of middle age with iron-grey hair, seated in a fine, red, square, arm-chair; it might be the very chair in which Titian placed Charles V. as an old man in the grand portrait at Munich; and it is the very same attitude—one arm firmly placed on the solid arm of the chair—the body seen in three-quarters profile, the head turned to face the spectator; the colouring, too, is the same, a harmony of red and black, with the same powerful modelling of the features. The only difference is in the background, and in the model, in so far as that the roughness too much insisted on by M. Delaunay has no parallel in Titian's painting.

Unlike this in execution is the portrait of an Abbé of about thirty; a thoughtful head, standing out well between the pillars of a cloister against an intensely blue sky and a distant landscape of pale hills faintly tinted with blue. It would require pages to enlarge on all there is in this portrait; the close observation and learned mastery, without a touch of coldness. It is hard to say which are the more remarkable, the eyes, touched with a bright point of light, behind the spectacles, the white slightly bloodshot, the lids red and heavy, suggesting over-study; or the





lips, in which the light and shade are rendered with incredible fidelity and truth.

Not unworthy to rank with these masterly works is M. Carolus Duran's portrait of a man in a furred coat. The head, close-cropped, florid, with a drooping moustache, stands out in solid modelling from a background of broken blue which is not in the least unpleasant. Still I must regret that the artist did not place his sitter in a light which would have obviated the *shine* he has touched in on the nose. A trifle, no doubt, but such trifles have their importance.

When M. Rixens sets to work to paint a portrait he is not the man to trouble himself about minor details. His sitter is a potter; he has lost no time in trying to put him in a fine attitude or give him a more genteel air than usual; he has seated him in a chair, in a velveteen suit, his hat on his head and his hands in his pockets. For a background the brick wall and gaping jaws of the kiln in which the "rustic fictiles" of the modern Palissy are fired; for colour the marone garments, the snuff-coloured hat, the fierce red of the bricks, and the bright carnations of the potter's cheeks.

And the work is splendid. It overflows with life, and even the artist's rivals cannot but exclaim :

"A tough customer, this Rixen!"

M. Bouguereau has his admirers and his detractors, all equally vehement. I am neither.

Thus I am free to judge of the portrait of himself—which is wonderfully like, with the air of haughty scorn which he puts on for all who do not agree with him. One hand rests on his hip, the other holds the collar of his coat, his plump person is held very upright and his head thrown back; those keen and piercing little eyes look through the spectator to his very marrow. It is a strikingly truthful attitude and the work is absolutely thorough. Everything is there; the wrinkles in the skin, the blue veins in relief, the play of light on the forehead, on the hands and fingers.

A man who seizes all these points and records them with such a sure hand is a master draughtsman; but there is something repellent in his

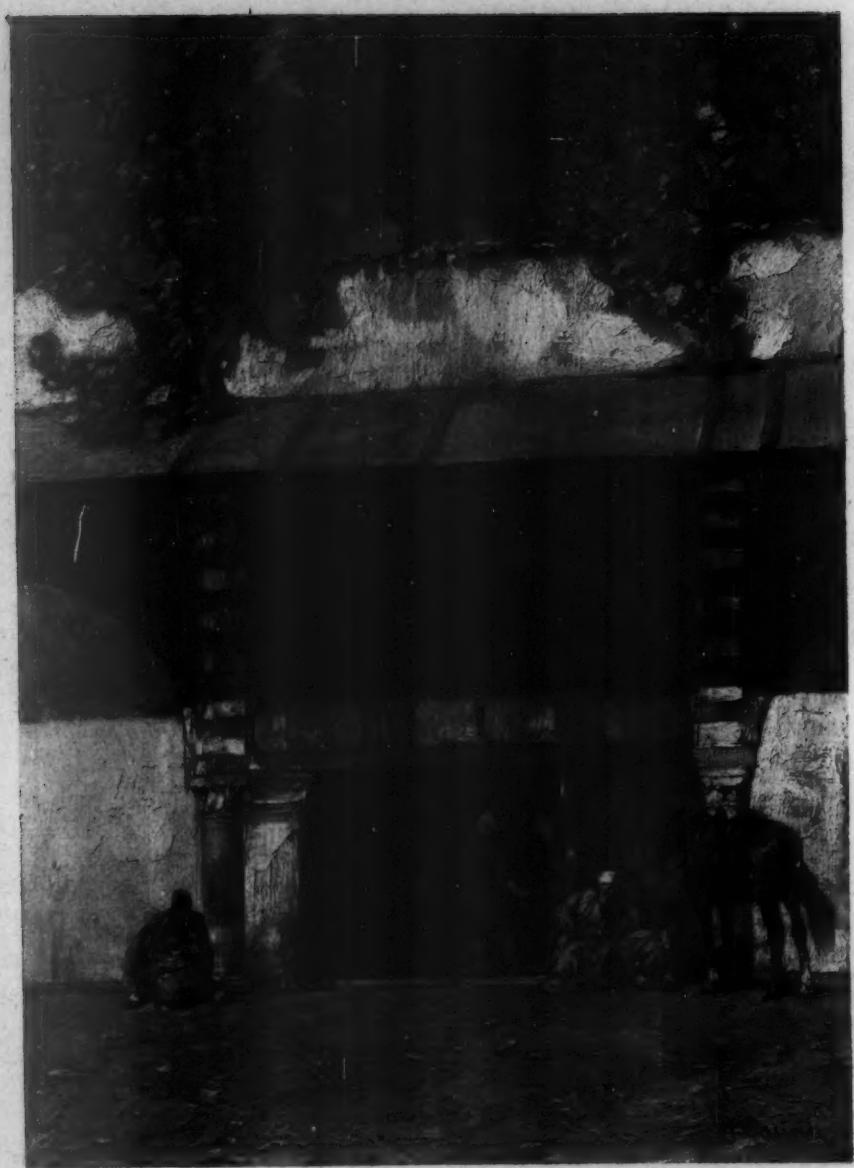
coldness, and the colour is icy; it is no use to talk to him of feeling, or emphasis, or judicious reserve. He sets everything in broad daylight, he tells you everything. M. Bouguereau overdoes it. That is my opinion; take it for what it is worth.

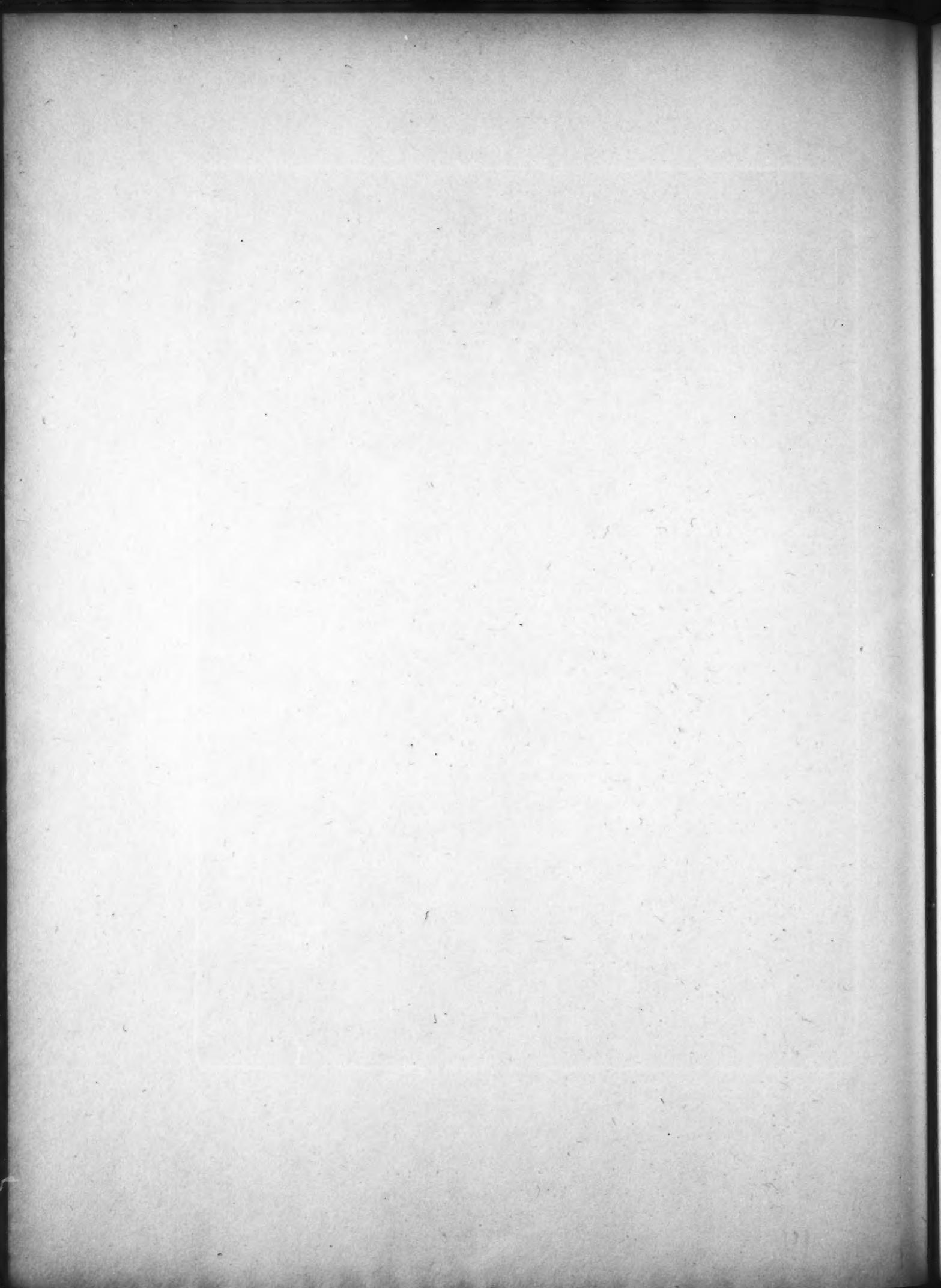
M. Jules Valadon is a studiously original painter; there are in the Luxembourg some works of his, especially a "Young Girl praying," which are amongst the best work of our time. We seldom fail to find him each returning year, with some fresh motive, some untried effect. I have seen studies of women by him in which the colour betrayed a long search for the means of expression; but he excels in portraits and in still life; above all, in studies of interiors, where the intentional simplicity of the subject gives a very special savour to the admirable painting. In this class of work few pieces can compare with this study of a stove with a brown earthenware pipkin on it; by the side of it stand kitchen pots and pans, and stoneware jars with tall bunches of lustrous leaves. Nor do I rate less highly a portrait of a young girl in a red bodice, with flaxen hair; the complexion of the face is unpleasing, the features are hard and masculine, but the painter's skill is undeniable; one cannot but admit that this picture is a fine work.

Among the good portraits here we must note this of Soitoux, the sculptor, whom M. Giacomotti has set before us vividly, with his face like a wrestler whom age has weakened but not subdued. The sitter has done nothing for the painter. He sits in his studio jacket of white linen, resting both hands on a rough-hewn walking stick, and gazing at us calmly with weary eyes. The work is well considered and thorough, and the colouring fine.

M. Saint-Pierre's portrait of himself has analogous qualities of life-like sincerity, and is better painted than is his wont. A young lady in a ball-dress by M. Jules Lefebvre has a good deal of charm. "Emmanuel Arago," by M. Benjamin Constant, is a fine profile of an old man, sculptured, as it were, on the canvas; M. Bramtot deserves praise for his picture of a young girl of dark complexion, and M. Machard is still the elegant painter we have ever known him, in his portraits of a lady and of a little girl.







"The best goods are in small parcels," says an old proverb, and as we look at the small portraits painted by Messieurs Bridgman, Weerts, Desvallières, and de Curzon, the saying is not falsified. M. Bridgman's picture of a young woman in a *Directoire* coat, black silk bodice and green frill, looking through her eye-glass with a hard imperious glance, has placed him in the ranks of those *hors concours*—above competition for the minor honours of medals and prizes. This figure is faultless in drawing, and the harmony of black and neutral greens in the painting reveals something more than ordinary skill. And now turn to this old woman in a black dress and cap, on a grey background, and this pleasing young girl in a grey gown against foliage, and pay your compliments to M. Weerts.

No modern vagaries are permissible in portraiture. To paint a face, and to paint it with absolute truth, to note the minutiae which constitute expression and the personal characteristics of the original, the light of the studio is the only good light.

This is not the case in painting genre. Here the painter is absolutely independent. He is free to choose the subject, the arrangement of the groups, and the distribution of the light. An effect takes his fancy and he seizes it; a new "note" suggests itself and he interprets it in his own way.

The young delight in such daring attempts; they do not always succeed in them. They are a source of danger to many, and a field of triumph to none but those who, having thoroughly studied their art, run no risk till they have gained experience and mastery, and try no innovations beyond the strict limits of good taste.

M. Doucet is such an one, and his "Autumn Evening," with its cross lights, the delightful originality of its subject and his facility of handling, is a gem of graceful elegance which none can have failed to appreciate. The scene is a large drawing-room in the country, opening on a park under a September sky. Clumps of trees are seen dark against the evening grey powdered with innumerable stars; a young man and a girl

stand on the threshold of the window, their pensive faces lighted up by the broad silvery moonlight. Inside the room an ordinary petroleum lamp sheds a soft light, mitigated by a lace shade, on a charming group of young women and girls listening to an old man of distinguished appearance and an air of innate and smiling ease. This picture has every quality; it is *distingué*, simple, unexpected, and marvellously true.

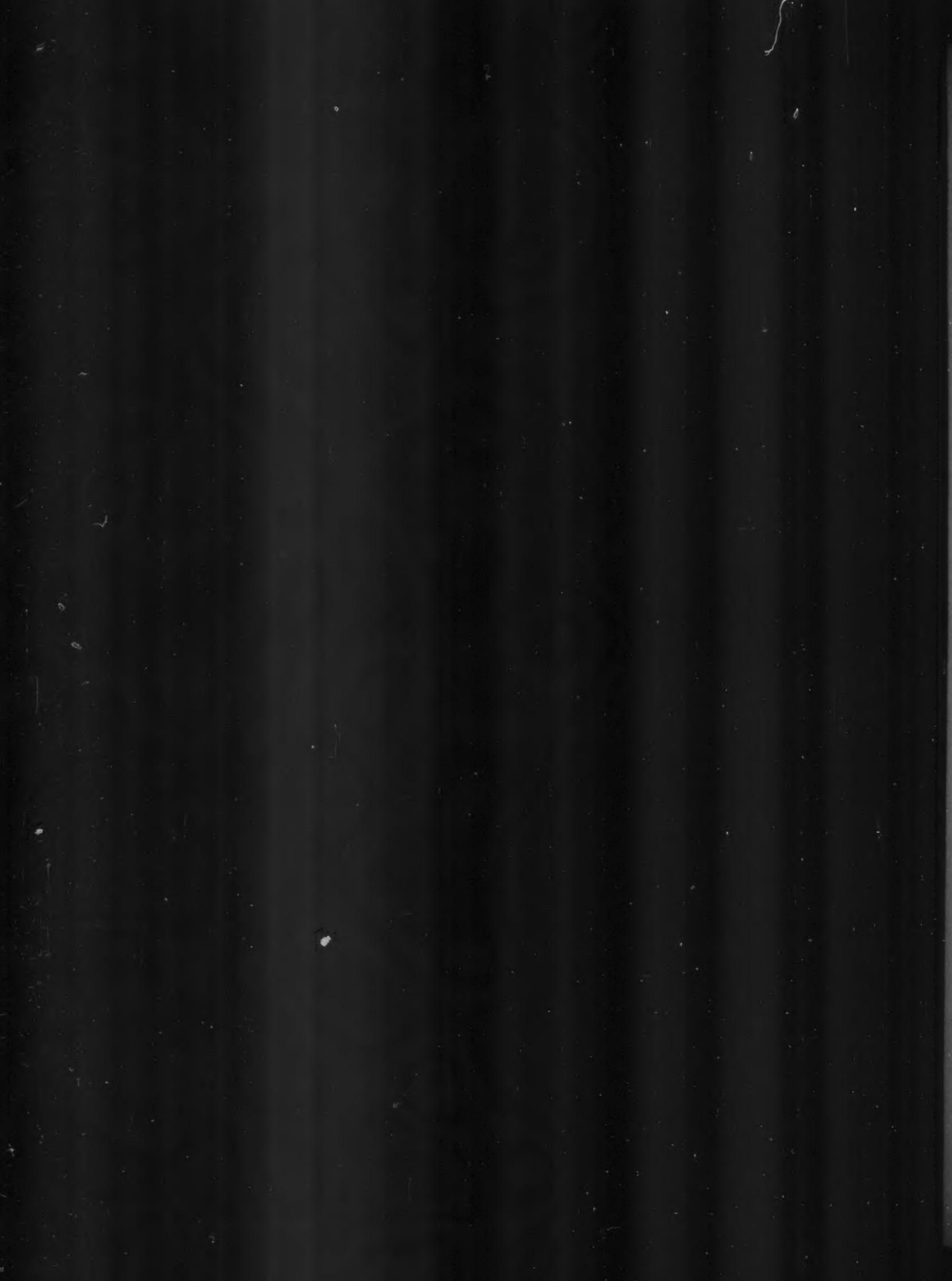
M. Raphael Collin's allegory, "Autumn Flowers," is in fact no more than a portrait, but it is full of the keenest melancholy. It is painted in the subdued and delicately-toned key of colour which the artist has adopted as a manner. It is the head and shoulders of a woman against a background of ivy intentionally low in tone; the flesh is pallid and sallow, the hair very black, relieved by bright scarlet geraniums; the lips are not red but brown, and the haunting look in the eyes is anxious and dimmed.

"Night in Flanders," by M. Jean-Charles Cazin, struck me as rather heavy; but he never did better work than the fine painting he calls "Autumn in the North." Under a low grey sky, heavy with coming squalls, spanned by a tenderly painted rainbow, and broken by rose-tinted lights, lies a limitless pale green plain cut across by a muddy road; there are a few thatched hovels; down the road a cart is being drawn by an ass. The beast is led by a woman wrapped in a thick woollen cloak, under which she is carrying a young child.

M. Cazin is practised in such effects and never treated them more grandly; the damp chill of autumn is rendered with uncompromising and piercing realism.

The style of M. Alexandre Nozal is nothing if not emphatic; but his emphasis is in the right place, and his "Baie des Trépassés" (Dead Man's Bay) on the coast of Brittany, is a powerful picture, in which the generous freedom of the brush is tempered by good guidance and a lofty feeling for decorative effect. This deep blue sea overhung by towering cliffs, these ravening crows rising in black flocks against the rose-pink, grey and tender blue of a dying summer's day, combine to produce a grandly tragical impression.

But this dexterous painter is no less at home among softer scenes.







How skilful, how masterly, is the treatment of these "broads" of Berry, in which a spring sky is reflected with the grey fleece of clouds! What lovely and solid colouring in these yellow flags, where half a dozen horses are feeding at large!

For five years now, I have kept an eye on M. Dinet, from the time when he first was out of his pupilage, and marked the steady improvement of his hand. This young man has every gift; he draws with masterly conscientiousness, he has the keenest eye for subtleties of tone, and whatever tendency he may have towards subjective assertiveness, he always bows to the plain truth of nature. Nature, to reward him, yields materially to his demands, and smiles on his audacity. Whether he paints "Arabs" galloping on their asses under the blinding sun of Africa, or "Girls with a Skipping-rope" in front of a village church in our lukewarm climate, he always infuses a touch of originality. His colour is sometimes daring, but it is never discordant.

He has the secret of being literal without being stiff, and accurate without a shade of dryness. Stand a little way off and look at these girls; they are inundated with sunlight, and we feel the crisp air, the fragrant breath of spring playing in their flying hair as it dances on their shoulders. Then the unctuous brilliancy of the blues, and the exquisitely graded distance! Is not the whole thing ideally fresh, and stamped with the most delicate modern feeling?

Now let us note, as we pass, two works by Pasini; very curious is the minute precision of the brush and the elaborate finish of every detail. "A Turkish Café" and "The Mysterious Door." Next two "Rustic Interiors," one by M. Bergeret, delightful in colour; the other by M. Maignan, full of sentiment; "After a Ball" and a "Young Dutchwoman," by M. Willy Martens; "The Sands at Bénerville," by M. Maurice Eliot; two studies of men in fencing costume, one by M. Doucet, the other by M. Frédéric Régamey; and some pleasing and elegant landscapes by MM. Le Villain, Damoye, Costeau, and Courtat.

M. Lerolle gives us a pretty study of the nude in a woman under an evening light, which, in truth, is too colourless; but the deeper shadows are well graduated.

M. Montenard has a girl seated in a field of olives by the roadside, a russet maiden under a scorching sky, and M. Adrien Moreau's "Return from the Fields" is full of pure and simple poetry, and remarkable for its treatment in tones of grey.

Some delightful surprises await us in the works in pastel. M. Laurent-Desrousseaux loves delicate colouring; his landscape called "Morning," and even more the "Combe d'Amaurey," give a high idea of his choice and conscientious spirit, which takes note of the most fugitive play of light and the subtlest harmonies of hue. In the former the still unlighted greenery is broken by the roofs of some farm buildings just touched to gold by the rising sun; a peasant woman is making her way along a sunken road, and the sunbeams, piercing through the trees, fleck the banks with brightness; in the second we have an evening effect; tall poplars still catch the rosy gleam of sunset, while all below is already wrapped in darkness.

Three heads of children, in one frame, by M. Amand Laroche, are skilfully modelled; and an "October evening," "Concarneau," and "Dordrecht in September," by M. Iwill, with their grey skies and still waters, have a lightness of touch which must appeal to every connoisseur.

Then among water-colours, we must name a view of the "Valley of Zermatt," in which M. Octave de Champeaux has grappled with the mighty mountain-forms with wonderful success, and "A Forest ride," by M. Allongé, whose broad and simple brush has touched the foliage with aerial lightness and given us a really beautiful piece of work.

* *

A man of any manners would, as a matter of course, have begun with the ladies; but as their exhibition was the last to open, it comes last under consideration in this chapter of notes. I fancy their feelings will not be hurt so long as justice is done to them, and we will do justice with all impartiality.

This is the eighth exhibition of the Society of Female Artists, and when I compare their work in former years with what they now have

to show, I am amazed at their progress. We knew already by the eminence some of them have reached—Madame Madeleine Lemaire in water-colour, Mademoiselle Breslau in oil-painting, and Madame Bertaux in sculpture—that women may attain the highest rank in art, and that difference of sex does not involve inferiority of talent; still we thought of those more remarkable examples as exceptional. Quite a mistake. Woman is wonderfully gifted for success in the arts; not equally in all. She will always find it least easy to excel in sculpture; but she may achieve perfection in water-colour, especially in drawing flowers. If she tries her hand in oil-painting her best success will be in portraits, as requiring patient attention. In flower-painting she is less happy; it needs, in oils, a manlier touch; and in landscape, for which women have shown very charming feeling in water-colour and in pastel, no woman has as yet been inspired to produce a highly-wrought picture, or anything beyond an interesting sketch.

This is the general impression to be gathered from this exhibition. Will the future belie the prophecy I am so bold as to put forth? I know not; but if facts should be against me I shall be happy to confess myself in the wrong.

The portraits contributed by Miss Lee-Robbins are remarkable works; in one she has painted a young lady dressed in black on a brown background; in the other she has depicted herself, in an elegant grey silk dress with jet embroidery. The pretty fair head, smiling brightly, is thrown up by one of the dark red backgrounds which are so dear to her master, M. Carolus-Duran, whose influence is also to be traced in the solidity of the brushwork and rich colouring.

We find the same broad and impulsive execution in some studies of the nude, boldly and soundly drawn in pastel by Mademoiselle Huillard, a pupil of M. Machard's, and in Miss Turner's portraits and studies of female heads. One of these especially, the "Portrait of Madame J. R.," is really grand in style. Mademoiselle Beaury-Saurel has been successful before now at the Salon, and still deserves success by her two portraits in charcoal. "A Japanese girl" and "Lilacs," contributed by Mademoiselle Anna Bilinska, and the pastels of Mademoiselle Jeanne Rougier, reveal

uncommon dexterity, in the handling of the brush, grace, and mastery. A portrait of a young girl, and some groups of white peonies and roses do Mademoiselle Buchet great credit; and Mademoiselle Louise Mercier finds stronger effects on her palette than might be looked for from a pupil of M. Jules Lefebvre.

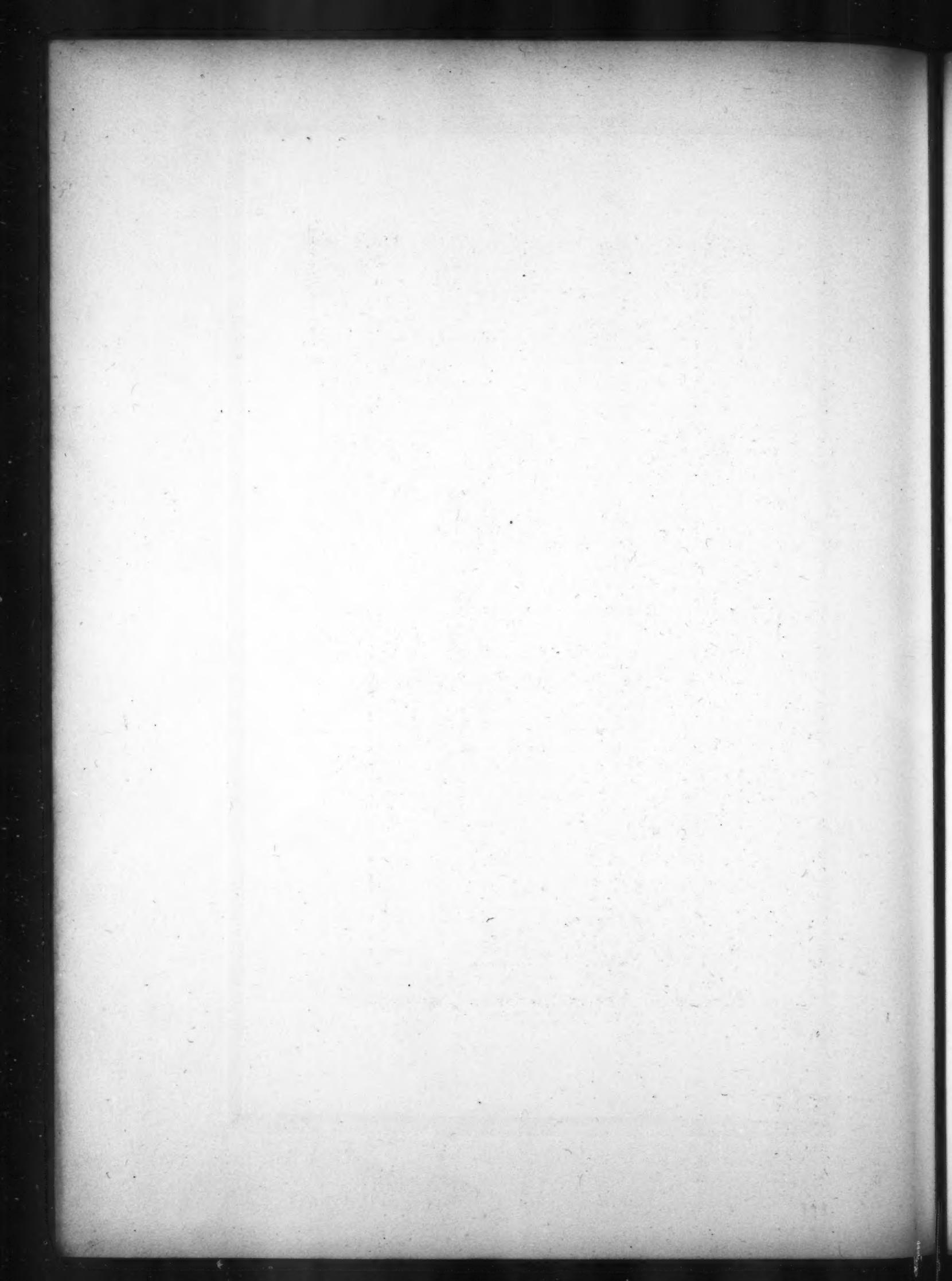
This is not the first time that we have met with Madame de Beau-fond's name; in past years I have taken occasion to speak as highly as I think of the "First Communion," a delicate harmony of greys and whites, which made a good figure at the Salon, after having been much admired at the Exhibition of Female Artists. The tenderness and grace which were so meritorious in that picture are to be found again, with added firmness and with richer and fuller colouring in the pretty study called "An Orphan." A young girl dressed in black, with crisp, fair hair is busy tying up some violets into a bunch for the beloved dead, and her look of earnest diligence with the expression of concentrated sorrow is most striking.

We feel at once that here we see heartfelt grief, deep but wordless, and we know that before her task is ended the flowers will be bedewed with her tears.

And is this damsel in mourning too, this beautiful brunette, whom Mademoiselle Estelle Rey has draped in black with a stiff hood on her head? This the artist has failed to tell us. It does not appear, however, that she had any purpose in view beyond that of painting a good portrait of a charming head. She has faithfully rendered the purity of contour, and somewhat haughty distinction of mien. As to the handling, it is free and broad, showing great dexterity of workmanship; the figure, which is cleverly draped, has an easy turn, and the blacks are lustrous and velvety in texture and of very capital quality.

To be only just I must still mention the "Portrait of Madame H. M." by Madame Jeanne Fichel, a "Portrait of an Old Man" by Madame Noémi Guillaume, "Evelina," by Mademoiselle Henriette Morisot, Madame Feuillas-Creusy's little "Foot-soldier," a profile of a handsome blonde in a red evening wrap by Mademoiselle Marguerite Jacquinot; two portraits by Mademoiselle Espenau, one representing a lady with grey hair, the





other a young woman in deep mourning against a background of foliage and peonies, "Indifference," by Mademoiselle Marie Robiquet, a study of "An old Peasant-woman," by Mademoiselle Verroust, and a portrait of a lady by Mademoiselle Vasselon.

I may add a pleasing rustic scene by Madame Demont-Breton, the rabbits painted by Mademoiselle Filippi, Mademoiselle Bonner's white cat, and the "Fête-Dieu," a perfect gem, by Mademoiselle Jacquemin.

The pictures exhibited by Madame Singer, Mademoiselle Hitz, and Miss Duncan, are genuinely important. Madame Singer is an impressionist from conviction; her portrait of a young lady in a light-hued dress standing out against a background of distant verdure, with here and there a group of houses is a highly interesting work; but she must be on her guard against allowing herself to take excessive liberties, and placing the figure in such a light as makes modelling impossible, and reduces it to a coarse and shapeless mass.

Miss Duncan loves and understands landscape in its more melancholy aspects, under the doubtful light of twilight and dawn, and she renders them with singular felicity. She is not less happy in her "Young Mother," which fascinates me by the conscientious care of the workmanship and the sympathetic naturalism of the subject.

Mademoiselle Hitz excels in open air work; her "Fisherman's Daughter," is finely and broadly treated, simply but faithfully modelled; altogether it is one of the pictures here which shows most individuality. This lady also exhibits some water-colours and studies in body colour, not at all inferior in quality. But in the lists where water-colour and pastel alone compete, I find an abundance of sincere and interesting work. I should place in the first rank the drawings exhibited by Mademoiselle Jacquemin, who uses the crayon colour with the genuine feeling of a Cazin; her "Hollow Way," "A Farm," "A Hillside," "The Seine at Saint-Ouen," are so many exquisite gems as to skill in brushwork, delicacy of appreciation and subtlety of colour, intense, soft in gradation, and yet fresh. Mademoiselle Kielland has some good studies in Norway, and Miss Kathleen Greatorex has contrived to shed a glory of colour on the interior of a miserable hovel.

As to flowers, a legion of ladies, married and single, exhibit flowers painted with amazing skill; flowers of all kinds in the greatest abundance: "A Rose-tree," by Madame Mazeline, "Verbenas," and "Climbing Roses," by Mademoiselle Cresty: "A Flower-harvest," by Mademoiselle Chavagnat, "Orchids," and "Lilacs," by Madame Goussaincourt; "Anemones," by Madame Marcotte, "Chrysanthemums," by Mademoiselle Vincendon. They haunt me, pursue me, and leave me scarcely space before closing this article, to offer my congratulations to Madame Bertaux on her marble figure, to Madame Descat on her "Home from the Fields," to Madame Martin Coutan on her bust of M. Ledrain and to Madame Claude Signard on her original and powerful portrait-head of M. Martin Nadaud.

These are the impressions I brought away from this exhibition; they are satisfactory for the present, and of good promise for the future.

THIÉBAULT-SISSON.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF FREDERICK WILLIAM

THE SERGEANT-KING

Frederick William I., the second king of Prussia, the father of Frederick the Great, regulated his life with military precision.

He rose early in the morning and began with a vigorous wash. Barrels full of water scarcely sufficed for his toilet; he was headlong, even in personal cleanliness.

Hardly was he dry when he read a prayer in a pious manual, and then summoned his Cabinet councillors. It was at seven in the morning during the winter, and at five in summer, that he gave this first audience.

All business was divided between two councillors; one undertook military, judicial, and private affairs; the other matters of finance and general administration. They submitted to the King reports prepared by the ministers on all sorts of subjects, great or small, for the ministers of Frederick William were only reporters who put questions and awaited the answer. They did not even work directly with the King, who doubtless thought himself freer to decide in their absence.

While drinking his coffee Frederick heard reports. More often than not he gave his decision at once, in the form of a note written in the margin.

Here is a specimen of his best handwriting, taken from a poorly written book, but one full of documents of the greatest interest, Förster's book, published at Potsdam in 1834-1835, with the title : *Friedrich Wilhelm der I., König von Preussen.*

The image shows five distinct cursive signatures of the German phrase "Narren possem". Each signature is slightly different in style and placement, appearing to be handwritten in ink. Below these signatures is a large, prominent initial "B" also written in cursive script.

These words *Narren possem* were of the sort which the King was fond of writing in the margin of assertions that struck him as ridiculous. They signify buffoonery, farce, or, as we should say nowadays, humbug.

The majority of these notes are hardly legible.

When the King had the gout in his right arm and was obliged to write with his left hand, there was hardly any one capable of deciphering his orders. One day, after reading a report from the Governor-General of Berlin about an outbreak of masons who had refused to work one Monday, he wrote : *Du musst den Rädelshärer hängen lassen ehe ich komme*, that is to say : "Have the ringleader hanged before my arrival." The Governor-General read instead of *Rädelshärer* *Rädel früher*. The phrase then signified : "Have Rädel hanged." The Governor-General only knew one man of this name, an officer, whom he caused to be at once arrested. Luckily he showed the note to one of the councillors able to read the

royal handwriting. He released the officer, repaired to the prison where the masons were confined, singled out one of the wretches who happened to have red hair, concluded therefrom that he was the ringleader, and had him incontinently hanged.

The marginal note which most often recurs is this : *Ich habe kein Geld* (I have no money). The King expressed this idea in several languages : *Poin d'argent*; or again, with a solecism : *Non habeo Pekunia*. At other times he wrote : *Plat abgeschlagen* (refused point-blank). He defended himself in every way, even with wit, against all demands for the remission of taxation or for pecuniary assistance. The ministry solicits aid for peasants to whom the year has been a very hard one. He answers : "Next year will be a good one; unnecessary." The house of the pastor of Driesen has been burnt down; to rebuild it seven hundred and twenty-two thalers and some odd groschen and pfennigs are wanted : "It's too magnificent," writes the King, "zu magnifick; be contented with one storey," and he gives a hundred and fifty thalers. The house of the Comptroller of Customs at Frankfort on the Oder is in need of repair; the estimated cost of the repairs is three hundred and fifteen thalers. Answer : "Why, it must be a château! Twenty-four thalers for its restoration." At other times he was of opinion that not enough was asked : "I would manage things much better, if God had given me the power of making money;" which was his way of saying that he would give nothing at all.

Once he remitted a debt, a big debt; a deficit of three thousand thalers had been brought to light in the accounts of an officer of the commissariat. The unhappy man had promised to restore this sum, and the minister begged for him royal indulgence, pleading that the guilty one had not been able to live and keep a family upon a salary of twelve thalers a month. "I remit the debt," writes the King, "but you will have him hanged."

The most touching entreaties left him indifferent. The ministers forward to him the petition of an artilleryman, whose father, a tenant of one of the royal mills, has been unable to pay his rent regularly, through serious misfortune. The man has died after the State has taken nearly all his goods. There is a further claim on his widow for one hundred and ninety-one

thalers, eleven groschen, which she cannot pay. Her little house will have to be taken from her. The son, pleading his father's services and his own, begs that his mother may be let off the sum due. The King's answer is : "Let her pay up!"

The whole government of this autocrat is revealed in these terrible scrawls. He cared for nothing but the army and finance; he esteemed none but his soldiers and the administrators of his revenues. He despised all the rest, and particularly the lawyers. A young man, son of the Chancellor of the province of Cleves, applies for a post. The King orders him to be examined : "If he is intelligent and pleasant-looking appoint him to a Chamber of the Domains. If he's a fool make a magistrate of him."

Whenever there is a conflict between a soldier and a civilian the King bears unfairly upon the second. Report is made to him of a quarrel between a lieutenant and a citizen. The King decides that the citizen shall be taken to the chief police office, that he shall remain for a week on bread and water diet, that he shall then apologize to the lieutenant, admit that he is a rude person, and sue for pardon. A law student of Halle is arrested in the street by a soldier; the University complains to the King, who answers : "No reasoning, this man is my subject."

Frederick William expected to be punctilioiusly served by his Chambers of the Domains, which were administrative departments. He would demand the impossible from them without blinking. A report is made to him of the progress of an epidemic : "Let the Chambers," says he, "take every measure to stop the evil; otherwise I hold them responsible." The plague is raging in the Levant; there is a risk of its introduction at the ports : "Take all precautions," writes the King to the general administration, "for if we get the plague I hold you responsible."

The famous declaration, which may serve as the epigraph for his reign, was written on a petition presented by the deputies of Eastern Prussia, who protested in French against the new impost, through which "the whole country would be ruined." Frederick William replies in four languages : "The whole country will be ruined? *Nihil credo, aber das credo, dass die Junkers ihre Autorität Nie pasvolam wird ruiniert werden.*



FREDERICUS
Rex Borussiae



WILHELMUS
Elector Brandenburgensis

Ich stabiliere die Souveraineté wie einen Rocher von Bronze; that is to say : "I don't believe it, but I do believe that the authority and the *liberum veto* of the Junkers will be ruined. I establish my sovereignty like a rock of bronze."

When he was in good humour he drew his orders instead of writing them. Fatigued at receiving supplications that advocates put into his hands through the intermediary of his big grenadiers, he had asked the jurisconsult Cocceji to prepare an edict for him for the suppression of this abuse. Cocceji addresses a report to him with this question : "With what penalty does his Majesty wish this offence to be punished?" The King draws in the margin a gibbet whereon an advocate is hanging in company with a dog. An edict in conformity with this was at once issued. It is evident that the King of Prussia did not find time hang heavy on his hands while he was getting through this first part of the day's business.

* * *

After dismissing his councillors, Frederick William received ministers, officers, ambassadors, and foreigners. At ten o'clock precisely, he was on parade. This, as every one knows, was one of the best moments of his day. To measure with a glance the height of these giants whom he had recruited throughout Europe by the most extraordinary means, to contemplate "these dear children in blue," as he used to call them, to admire their immobility in the ranks and the mechanical precision of their movements was the great joy of the Sergeant-King.

At eleven o'clock, on his return to the Château, he worked with his secret councillors until noon, which was the hour for his repast. This dinner-time was another of his good moments, and it lasted for about two hours. The bill of fare was a long one. Soup to begin with, wherein swam a quarter of veal, or a fowl, or a fish, to titillate the appetite; then two dishes of beef; two other meat dishes, ham or goose, or else smoked sausage with black cabbage; a fine fish; a pie, or a tart; a stew, or else a roast with divers accompaniments; salad, butter, and cheese. For the Queen and her children there were, instead of the big

dishes, a few delicacies. At dessert, fruit according to the season. Sweets were only served on days when the family received princely guests. On those days the table even went in for the luxury of things out of season.

Each man drank his bottle of *vin ordinaire*, then one, two, and even three half-bottles of old Rhine wine, according to the humour and the appetite of the guests. The choice was made by the majority of votes, which were counted by the King. It was the sole matter in which he ever consulted his subjects. Even then he was desirous that they should vote "straight," that is to say, for plenty of drink. General Massow, a very austere man, always wanted to stick to one half-bottle, and so, at the Court of Prussia, half-bottles got the name of "Massows." After the Rhine wine the King had Hungarian wine served as long as it pleased him to stay at table.

Frederick William looked after his own cellars; he exercised the greatest care in the purchase of his Rhine and Hungarian wines. He provided his kitchen with the dishes which pleased him, and, at the same time, he insisted on a very close reckoning with the cook. He was always in dread of being robbed by his servants. One of his most frequent recommendations to his son, while the latter was studying public economy at Cüstrin, was, above all, to be thrifty in his household expenditure. "An unthrifty soldier," he said, "is a useless soldier. Charles XII. was a brave soldier, but a bad manager. When he had money, he spent it. He let his army starve; once conquered, he could not pull himself together again. So look after your housekeeping. Lay out your money with care. Learn to buy cheap. Be ever on the watch for some saving." Another time he writes: "Is the cook a good manager? Does he waste meat and butter, or no?" And he promised to send the future Frederick the Great a method of checking kitchen accounts; for his part, he was not to be taken in.

One day he ate some mutton tripe prepared with cabbage, in a citizen's house, and found it delicious. He asked for the receipt and the cost from the mistress of the house, and ordered the dish from his cook, who served it up nicely, but charged three thalers for it instead of a few half-pence, for which he was requited with thwackings.

The time spent at table was not thrown away. Sometimes one of the guests, a minister, a general, or an ambassador, was entrusted with the *discourse*. He led the conversation, which the King's questions kept going; or, may be, one of the guests gave an abstract of the European news-sheets. There was some broad joking, but no indecent word was ever uttered before the Queen and her children. It was rare, however, for their spirits not to be a good deal heated. The King hardly ever rose from table without being a little tipsy, and much too often the whole table, the Queen and her children excepted, was completely drunk.

* *

After dinner came outdoor exercise on foot, on horseback, or in a carriage, according to the weather or the King's health; but Frederick William never took exercise for pleasure's sake. He chatted with everybody and made enquiries about everything. The passer-by, on being questioned, had to tell him his name and his profession. The loafer had to return to his work, and that forthwith. So a meeting with the King was feared. One day he catches sight of a man slipping off and hiding in a house. He sends a page after him: "What's your trade?" "Dancing-master." To make sure of the man's telling the truth, the King bids him dance a saraband and dismisses him. Another dancing-master (this corporation knew it was not a favourite), perceiving the King coming up on horseback, makes off. The King reaches the place where he has disappeared, and has search made for the refugee, who is discovered under a heap of straw. It was a Frenchman; he gave himself out as a commercial traveller representing a Marseilles house; but his real profession was discovered; he was condemned to four weeks' labour at carting materials destined for the construction of the church of St. Peter.

Poorly dressed people were much afraid of the King, who had a fancy for smartness. A poor child of Israel having run away, as the King was passing by, so as to hide his rags, was caught. "Why are you running away like that?" "Because I am afraid." "You shouldn't fear me," replies the King, "you should love me," and he gives the timid one a good sound thrashing.

He did not go so far as to forbid every kind of amusement. It seems he was fond of a game of bowls, for finding in a tavern at Potsdam some lovers of the game who were devoting themselves to it successfully, he paid them many compliments. All the games of bowls in Potsdam had forthwith plenty of customers, but the King passed by again. The players were dispersed and beaten.

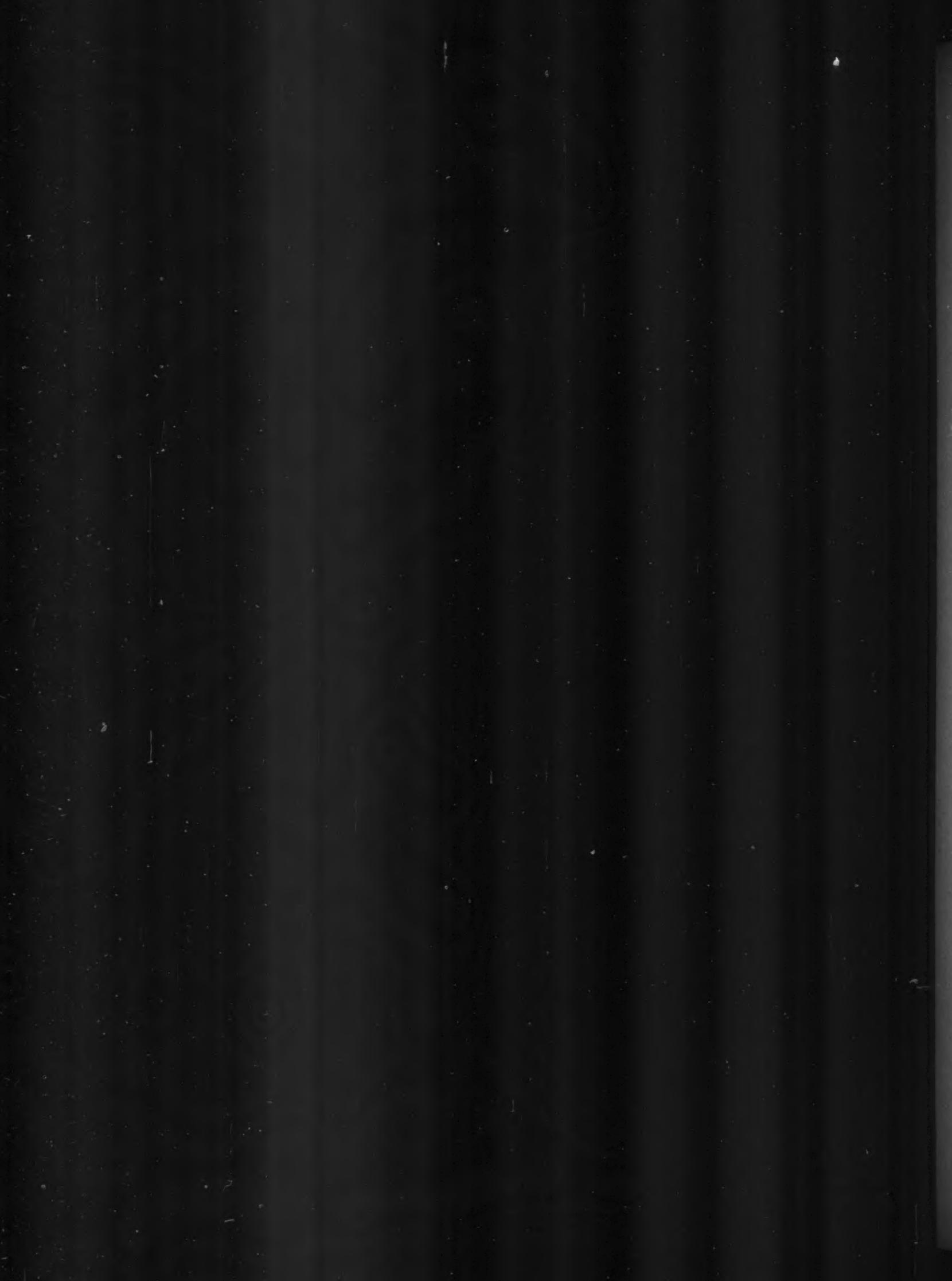
Frederick William had three sticks, a Spanish cane, and two long buckthorns. He had himself cut these two sceptres, which are to-day preserved in the museum of the Hohenzollerns. They are, to be sure, as documents in Prussian history.

He did not always strike. Once it happened to him to compel a husband and wife, whom he heard quarrelling, to kiss. Possibly they would have preferred a thwacking to this affection by order. He did not frighten everybody, for he was often beset by people who handed him petitions, or poured their grievances into his ear. He insisted upon his interlocutor looking him straight in the face, and he gazed into the whites of his eyes. As he was a very sensible and a very just man, he decided in favour of the deserving parties. In this way he learnt to know of, and to correct, many acts of injustice.

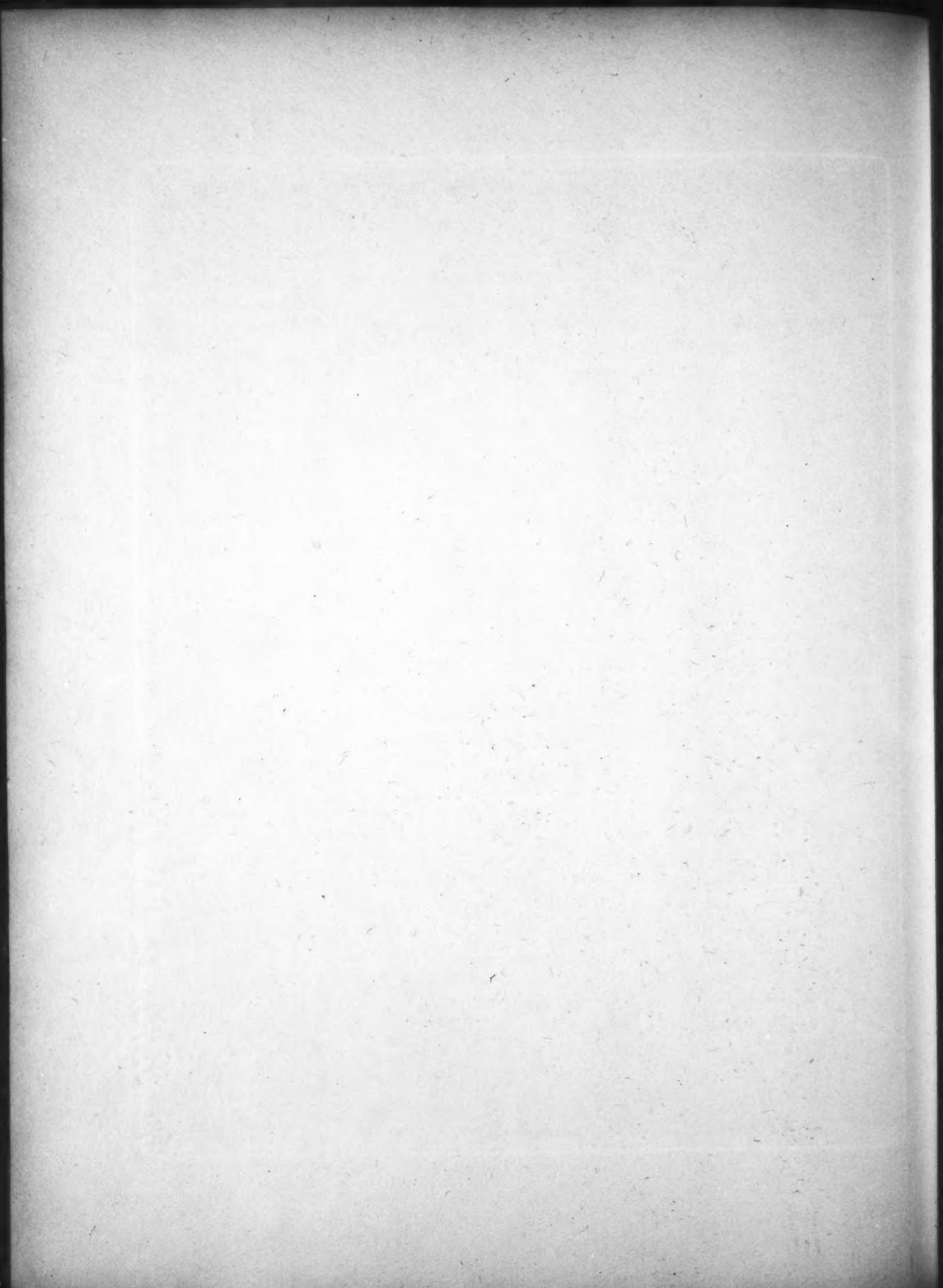
Thus the King of Prussia's walks were inspections. It was in taking his walks abroad that he surveyed the building of Berlin. It was his ambition to embellish his capital. To build a house was one way of paying court to him. When people had not the idea he put it into their heads. "Such and such a fellow has money," he would say, "he should build," and the fellow had to build. The King found his amusement in the quarters where building was going on. Under his gaze the mason did not lose a minute.

* * *

His walk over, the King worked, or admitted audiences. In the evening he presided over the *Tabaks Collegium*, the Tobacco College. It was not he who invented this fashion of holding his Court in the midst of a cloud of smoke. His father, the magnificent and solemn Frederick I., had inaugurated these evening assemblies, but he held them in a big Louis







Quatorze *salon*, by the light of wax candles, that shone in a big lustre or in mirrored brackets. The bewigged courtiers sat bolt upright in arm-chairs. At the top of the room the King and Queen presided; the Queen filled the King's pipe. This pomp was in imitation of Versailles, but with a trade-mark of its own, for you cannot imagine Madame de Maintenon filling the pipe of Louis XIV.

In every thing Frederick William reversed the course taken by his father. A quarter of an hour after the latter had breathed his last, he shut himself in his study, meditated for a few moments, and summoned the Court Grand-Marshal, Herr von Printzen. He asked for a roll of the household, ran through the long list of officers and pensioners, took a pen, and drew a line from top to bottom, saying : "I abolish the lot." Dazed, the Grand-Marshal left the room without a word. The chamberlains, courtiers, pages, dignitaries, great and small, were crowding the antechambers, and noticed the rueful countenance of Herr von Printzen. General von Tettau, a chamberlain, chief of the body-guard, knight of the Black Eagle, took the list from his hands and saw the fatal line : "Gentlemen," he said, "the King, our kind master, is dead. The new King is sending us all to the devil."

Nowhere is the contrast between the two manners better seen than in a comparison of the two Tobacco Colleges. Frederick William held his in a bare hall, where wooden seats, rudely painted, were ranged round a long wooden table. Opposite each smoker was a clay pipe in a wooden case; the King's case was decorated with a few silver ornaments. Baskets held the tobacco, which was rank tobacco.

Peat burned in copper vases. When the King had taken his seat at the upper end of the table, the members of the College took their places. They did not all smoke, but they all had to hold a pipe. This was done by the Prince of Dessau, and by Seckendorff, the Imperial Ambassador. The latter, a very good courtier, who duped the honest Frederick William to perfection, pretended to smoke by blowing into his pipe. Each had in front of him a jug of beer with a glass. After an hour or two, bread, butter, and cheese were served at the big table. At a side-table ham and cold veal were at the disposal of the guests. When there was some guest of distinction the King regaled the company with a salad and fish.

He made the salad and served the fish, and during these operations he washed his hands four or five times. On these days he provided Hungarian wine; on ordinary occasions only common wine or beer was drunk.

The Tobacco College had a fixed set of members and occasional guests, some very illustrious, some the reverse. Stanislas Leczinski took his seat among them more than once. Frederick William was very fond of him. It was a contest between the two princes who should smoke the most; they got as far as thirty-two pipes in a sitting. But there was also to be seen from time to time in this assembly the schoolmaster of Wusterhausen, to whom the King had taken a fancy because he couldn't get his school-children to cry out in answer to his invitation : "*Unser Schulmeister ist ein Esel* (our schoolmaster is an ass)." The children would keep answering : "*Nein.*"

There were buffoons among the regular members. This part was filled by men of science, real men of science, whom the King, with a mighty contempt of erudition, a useless thing in his eyes, subjected, or let others subject, to terrible practical jokes. Naturally there was a good deal of jesting, not always very witty in kind, and disputes arose in which the King himself was not spared. One day, in exchange for a mischievous gibe, he was insulted. He declared his honour as an officer wounded, and insisted upon fighting a duel. They had all the trouble in the world to dissuade him from it; he repeated that he was an officer, a colonel, and compelled to seek reparation. Ultimately he consented to allow one of the officers of his regiment to fight in his place. This champion got a good sword-thrust for his pains. When they were not quarrelling they were guffawing. "What did you think of the royal family?" asked the King, one evening, of a colonel who had returned from Paris. "Ah, Sire, don't speak of it! Not one of 'em over five feet!" And the rafters shook with a burst of Homeric laughter.

The College also included ministers, and other things were done in it besides eating, drinking, and jesting. The conversation would turn upon the petitions received in the course of the day, and thence upon affairs of State; on the gazettes of France, Germany, and Holland, of which the boldest was the Dutch *La Courante*, and from that upon general

politics. Grave resolutions were taken more than once in this strange symposium, which the Crown Prince of Prussia mocked his father by comparing to the Senate of Rome.

After having eaten heavily, drunk deeply, and shouted loudly, his head very often heavy and his legs untrustworthy, Frederick would retire to his chamber. He read a prayer, and had stories told to him until he fell asleep. Naturally he slept ill, and was awoke by the drum, that drum against which the children of Prussia cried out, especially when they were ill, but the King would rather have let them die, as his daughter the Margravine of Baireuth said, than give up his drum.

Such was, in ordinary times, Frederick William's day. At certain moments of the year there were settled periods for amusements or occupations. The principal amusement was hunting. It was a fatiguing thing, and sometimes a dangerous (when they hunted the aurochs or the bear). The occupations were reviews and journeys of inspection.

At the end of May and the beginning of June there was a review of the garrison of Berlin; six regiments of infantry, one regiment of mounted gendarmes, six squadrons of hussars. The operation lasted a fortnight. The King saw his men one by one, spoke to nearly all, softening the tones of his voice : "My son, how do you find yourself in my service?" On the last day a big parade and big manœuvres. Frederick William remained on horseback from two o'clock in the morning till five in the afternoon, with a brief meal by way of breakfast, which took place on the manœuvre ground.

In his tours of inspection he travelled with a small suite and with extraordinary rapidity. His father, who never moved without a *cortège*, took fourteen days to go from Berlin to Königsberg; for him four days sufficed. In three days he would get to Cleves. As his journeys were never announced beforehand, he was expected everywhere at once, but his arrival always caught somebody by surprise. The Queen herself did not know the day of his return. One evening he returns to Berlin after having done thirty miles in the day. He finds the Queen at a ball she was giving at the château of Monbijou. He had no taste for these diversions. Without a word to any one, he remounts his horse, and goes

back to Potsdam to sleep. He was, it is true, out of humour. He arrived from Königsberg where the dragoons had been manœuvring badly; wherefore he had refused to accept the breakfast offered him by the colonel, and had preferred to eat a pasty in a village inn.

He inspected not only his garrison, but all the services of the State. He saw to everything himself, being, as he said, the Minister of Finance and at the same time the Minister of War of the King of Prussia. He verified the accounts, a thing he was well versed in; and his justice was terrible.

Always in quest of useful improvements, he had marshes drained, springs filled up, woods thinned, deserts peopled. He repaired the ravages of war, of the plague, or the natural shiftlessness of his Polish subjects. He planted out men in Lithuania. And it was thus that every day, either travelling or at home, this rough workman toiled incessantly at the same task : the creation of Prussia.

ERNEST LAVISSE.





(*SECRET CORRESPONDENCE FROM ODETTE TO HERSELF*)

Paris, April 10th.

No, I do not think I shall read them the letters I write to myself. I have given up any idea of that sort. I have scarcely been in Paris a week, and already I find it difficult to be quite frank in my relations with the Rénals. I can think of only one point on which to express myself with perfect unreserve, and that is the wonderful development of Claire's beauty since we parted as girls. It struck me, I suppose, with peculiar force when she came to meet me at the station, so great was the contrast between her blooming radiance and my own haggard aspect, after the fatigues of my journey and the horrors of sea-sickness! I really think I should not have known her, but for her rushing at the ladies' carriage in which I was, and calling me by my name. She is truly a lovely creature, and it needs a long scrutiny to discover any flaw in her beauty. If you are hypercritical, you may perhaps point out that the little white forehead is too narrow and gives one an impression of rigidity. There is no room there for any great wealth of ideas. But then, the defect is hidden by such pretty golden curls. The unvarying smile on the delicately curved lips wearies one somewhat after a time, certainly, and she is, perhaps,

(*) See *Art and Letters* for May, 1889, vol. II, p. 121.

just a trifle too plump. In ten years time she will be a Juno, in ten years more— Well, these are reflections that I certainly can't submit to her, and yet, if I am to keep my promise to Lord Melton, I must set down my impressions of France and my French friends with absolute sincerity.

I had a letter from him this morning, in which he exults over the bad weather that must prevent my seeing Paris to the best advantage. He little imagines how independent of all external influences is my love for the dear city. I like everything that belongs to Paris, its mud, its rain, its cold. The air I breathe here invigorates me, whether it blow from north or east. The little dusty sunbeam that has just struggled into my room, feeble as it is, seems full of familiar and sympathetic atoms. Everything in Paris delights me, and, since I am pledged to tell the truth at all hazards, most of all— M. Rénal !

I was right in my presentiment that he and I would get on together. Nevertheless, I felt that his first impression of me was not altogether favourable. I think he was even disappointed. That horrible crossing had made havoc of my complexion and drawn dark circles round my eyes. And then, I felt ill at ease, as I do only in the presence of some one immensely my intellectual superior, and my very embarrassment led me to chatter a great deal of nonsense. My distress at this first meeting was almost equal to my sufferings on the boat. I was hardly conscious of where I was, or what I was saying.

He looked at me in such an uncomfortably penetrating way. His observation of me was at first scrutinizing, but friendly; then it seemed to take a tinge of irony, and for a moment or two, I felt that I detested him. But it was only for a moment or two. Now, my impressions of him are very much modified. The stupefying glamour he exercised over me at our first meeting has passed completely away. We are the best friends in the world, and talk as if we had known each other all our lives.

He is coming presently to take me for a little walk on the Boulevard, "shopping," as it is called in that land where a pretty shop is unknown. I shall make him carry all my parcels. It is very piquant to lead about a lion by a silken string. Of course I should not have ventured to suggest

the expedition myself. Claire was the perhaps involuntary promoter of the plan. She and I had arranged to spend a day among the shops together, when it was suddenly remembered that Clairette must be taken to the dentist. She is changing her teeth. There is a great deal of discussion on this important subject. Of course the model mamma gave up her pleasure. The day before we were not able to go to the Eighteenth Century Exhibition because of Clairette's Sol-Fa class! Fancy a child of six being taught the Sol-Fa system! The poor little monkey is really rather a nuisance. She is an attractive little creature on the whole, but a nuisance nevertheless. Would you believe that Claire positively brought her to meet me the other day on my arrival! Her presence checked our first confidences, and caused an uncomfortable squeeze in the little brougham, in which, as it was, there was barely room for all my packages. From that moment, I seem to have felt steadily fixed upon me a pair of large wide-opened eyes, gazing with astonishment, not unmixed with jealousy and distrust, at the strange lady mamma seems so fond of.

Children, who are perpetually noticed and caressed, whose belongings are their slaves, have all the faults of those little pet dogs who fly at the ankles of visitors. Clairette is a perfect tyrant to her mother. Poor Claire is expected to dress her, to take her for a walk, to teach her; she leaves her husband and me in the evening, to go and put her darling to bed. If we happen to be chatting comfortably by the fire over a cup of tea, presently we hear a little sound at the door like the scratching of a mouse, and a shrill little voice pipes out : "Mamma, mamma, I know my fable." No doubt the said fable has often interrupted other *tête-à-tête*, the outcome of which would have been to dissipate the clouds that have risen between two noble and charming natures, truly attached to each other, although so dissimilar. At least, I know that Claire adores her husband, as much as it is in her to adore any one. How could she help it? And as to Max. His passion for Mademoiselle Féline, if it ever existed, was a very fleeting fancy. I have proved that it would be easy enough to draw him back.

Of course they took me at once to the famous play all Paris is now flocking to see; the Monday journals criticize it in a strain of Pharisaical

censure. I must confess myself that some of the situations scandalized me at first, but poetry casts its divine mantle over the most startling passages, and one accepts them. My final verdict is that anything may be said in verse or song, so long as the verse or song is of the first rank! The deep emotion I tried in vain to suppress must have been infinitely more flattering to the author than any of the compliments I found it impossible to pay him. As to the actress, she was at times sublime, and Claire's description of her appearance was anything but impartial. My poor little friend has the common feminine weakness of depreciating what she herself hates. But it seems to me undeniable that the Féline, in addition to her splendid talent, has a sort of personal seductiveness difficult to describe, and which to men I should fancy must be peculiarly attractive. I have noticed that what repels and even disgusts us a little is apt to fascinate them. People are not sufficiently alive to the enormous difference of impressions in the sexes. Hence many absurd contentions.

Féline's hollow cheeks, her mysterious smile, what Claire calls her "ghoulish eyes," betray a passionate temperament that I can conceive to be vastly more entralling than beauty, from other points of view than ours. Keeping my schemes of reconciliation in view, I was careful not to oppose myself to the enthusiasm generally excited by Mademoiselle Féline. I applauded her to the extent of splitting my gloves, I piled one hyperbole on another in praise of the acting, the figure, the face, and the attitudes of the Circe. Claire shot furious glances at me, doubtful whether I might not be going over to the enemy, fearful lest I should heap fuel on the fire of her husband's devotion. Meanwhile I kept my lorgnette fixed steadily on Féline, seeking a weak place in her armour at which to aim a mortal blow. When, in the third act, she throws herself back in a great arm-chair, and muses, her head resting on her hand, her foot raised on a velvet cushion, I fired my shot in the most innocent fashion possible : "It is curious to see how the lack of breeding comes out in a creature otherwise so marvellously gifted. That exquisite Féline is for ever condemned to trailing skirts! The sylph has the feet of a water-carrier!"

"I never noticed it," said M. Rénal curtly, and with manifest dis-

pleasure. He took the glasses from my hand and applied them to his own eyes. After a long, a *very* long and searching examination, he returned them without speaking.

"You have offended him," whispered Claire.

And indeed he behaved with marked coolness to me all the rest of the evening. I began to feel a little uneasy. Was I not, after all, a fool, to voluntarily deprive myself of a sympathy and companionship infinitely delightful to me, for the sake of a friend who could not in the least appreciate my intentions?

Happily, my uneasiness was not of long duration. I had agreed to *déjeuner* with the Rénals the next day. I arrived rather early, before Clairette's lessons were quite finished, and was shewn into the little drawing-room, which I found empty. The morning had been rainy, and my boots were damp. I sat down by the fire, and raising my skirt, perhaps a little high, proceeded to dry them. Suddenly I heard M. Rénal's voice behind me :

"I see that you have every right to be severe in your criticisms, Madame."

I hastily flung down my dress, very much confused. But happening to glance into the mirror over the mantel-piece, I caught a smile on Max's lips that I had never seen there before. It said as plainly as words that he had all at once become conscious of personal charm in me.

"I think there is nothing so attractive as a pretty foot," he said, sitting down beside me. "I may venture to tell you so now, though you have a lovely hand too. But there is something even rarer than a beautiful hand. Hands are deceptive, they are capable of being improved upon. The hand of a woman like Féline, for instance, may owe much to judicious treatment. But the foot refuses to dissemble. You were quite right last night. Her foot was even bigger than her shoe. It was bursting out of its prison in a perfectly ludicrous manner."

"Besides which," I added, intoxicated by my easy victory, "that deceitful shoe was loaded with ornament in a way that suggested some hidden deformity. My creed touching apparel in general, and shoes in particular, is, that things ought to be so well made that no one should notice them."

"So that all attention may be concentrated on the wearer, I suppose?" concluded M. Rénal, mischievously. "Of course a rich setting adds nothing to the brilliance of a diamond. But that is a fundamental principle of coquetry."

"Perhaps. If so my sister-in-law Isa must have been particularly free from the vice. I have seen her displaying on one slipper a rosette, a humming-bird, and a set of hunting emblems. There is room for a good deal on some English feet."

"You were quite right to bring yours back to France again," rejoined M. Rénal, laughing, "for they do not need any such foils. I might have guessed at their perfection from the way you walk. I pride myself on being a great connoisseur in this respect. I think there is nothing more alluring than the physiognomy of a lively, alert little foot, now tripping along, now slackening speed, now hesitating at an obstacle, now overcoming it boldly or avoiding it dexterously, now loitering, now anxious, now impatient. By noting such details as these, you will learn more about the woman you are following than in a two hours' conversation upon her character, her temperament, her tastes, and her education."

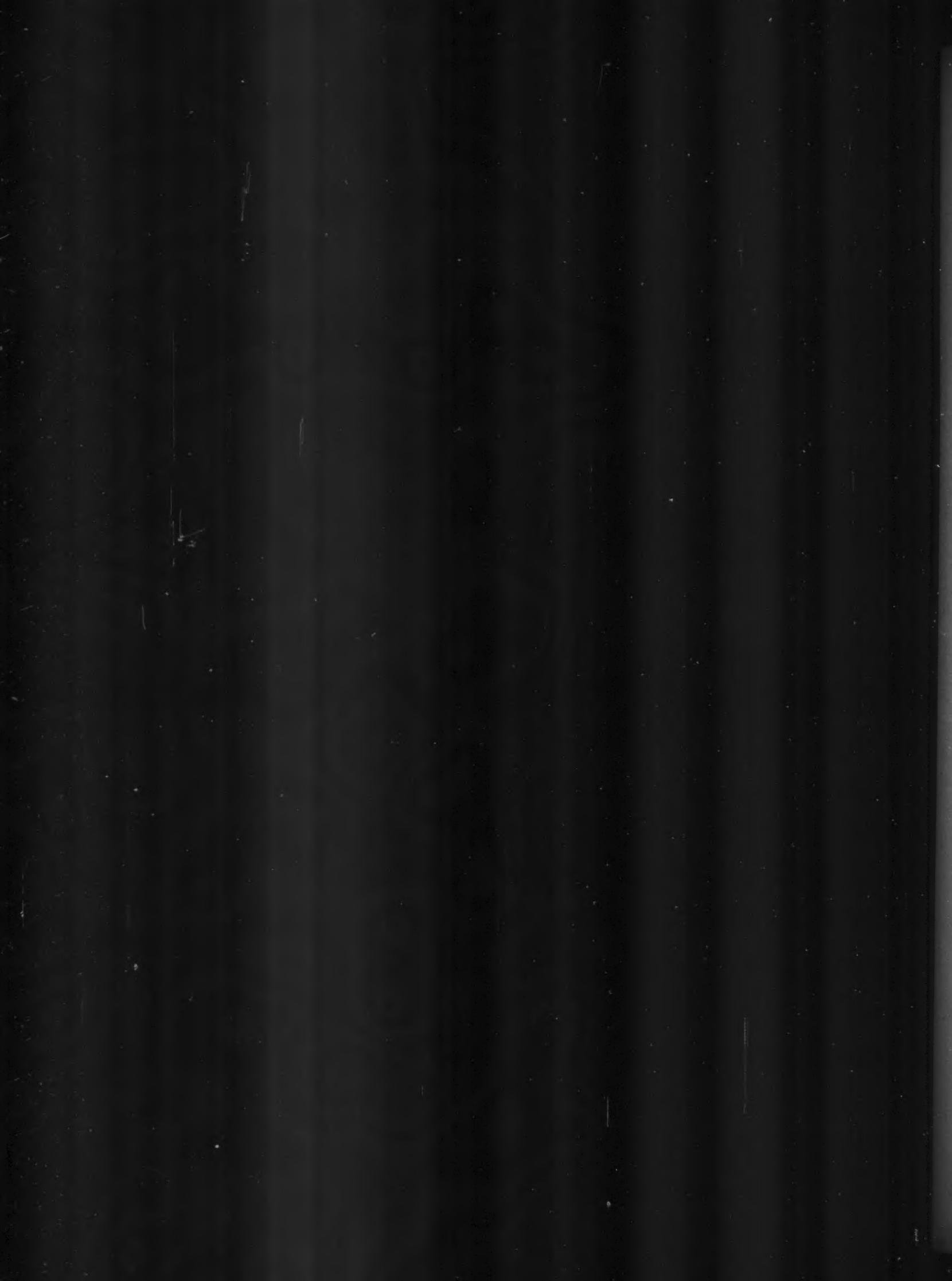
"You are drawing upon your bachelor experiences now," I observe, glancing at the door through which Claire may be expected to enter.

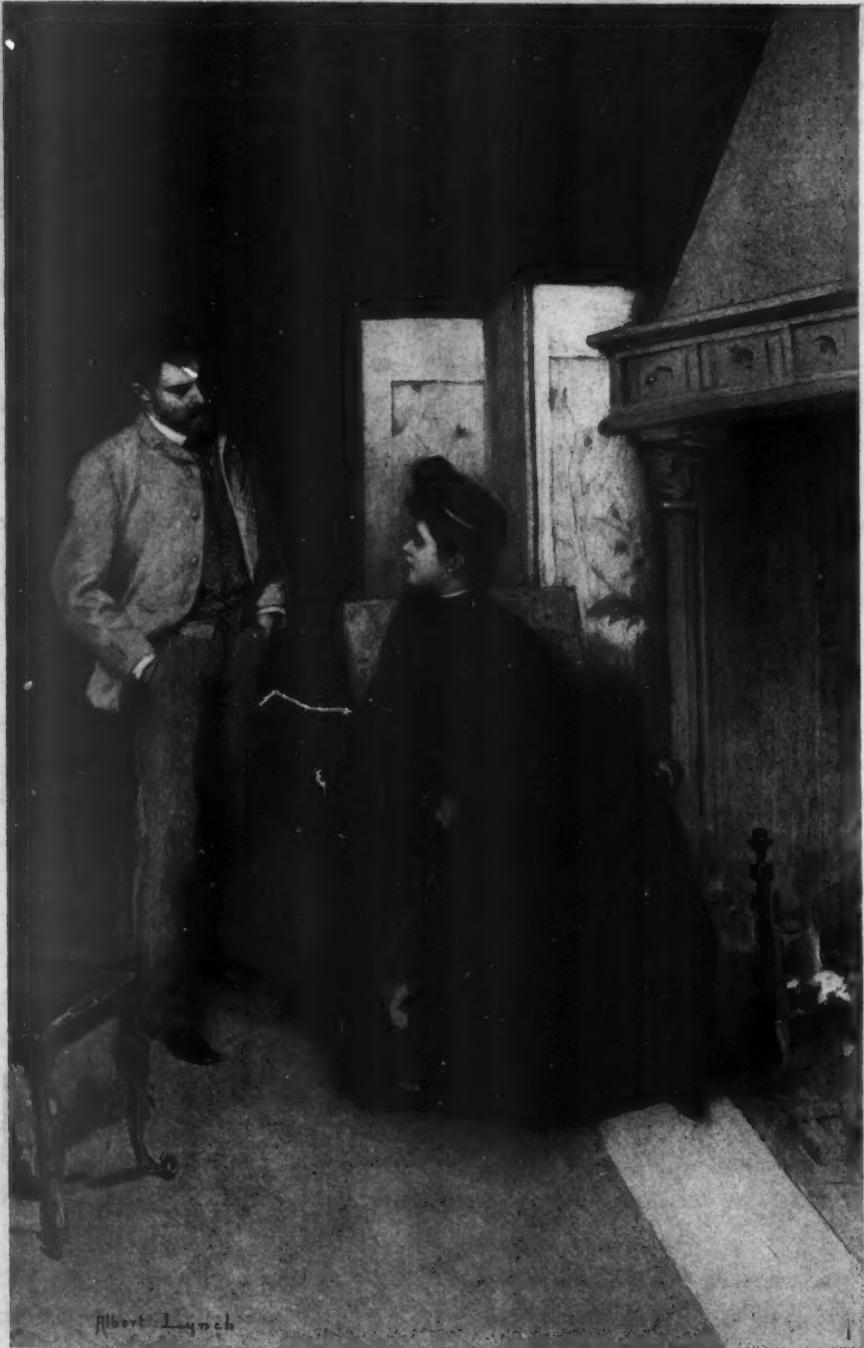
"But for that to be possible," continues Max, without noticing my interruption, "the foot must be allowed absolute liberty of expression. How can it be eloquent if it is in torture? Can it fail in such a case to take on the gloomy physiognomy of all oppressed creatures? Therefore, I congratulate you on having the good sense to wear shoes a size too large for you, tiny as they are."

"Do let us leave my poor boots out of the question," I say, drawing them in under my skirts; "we were talking about Mademoiselle Féline."

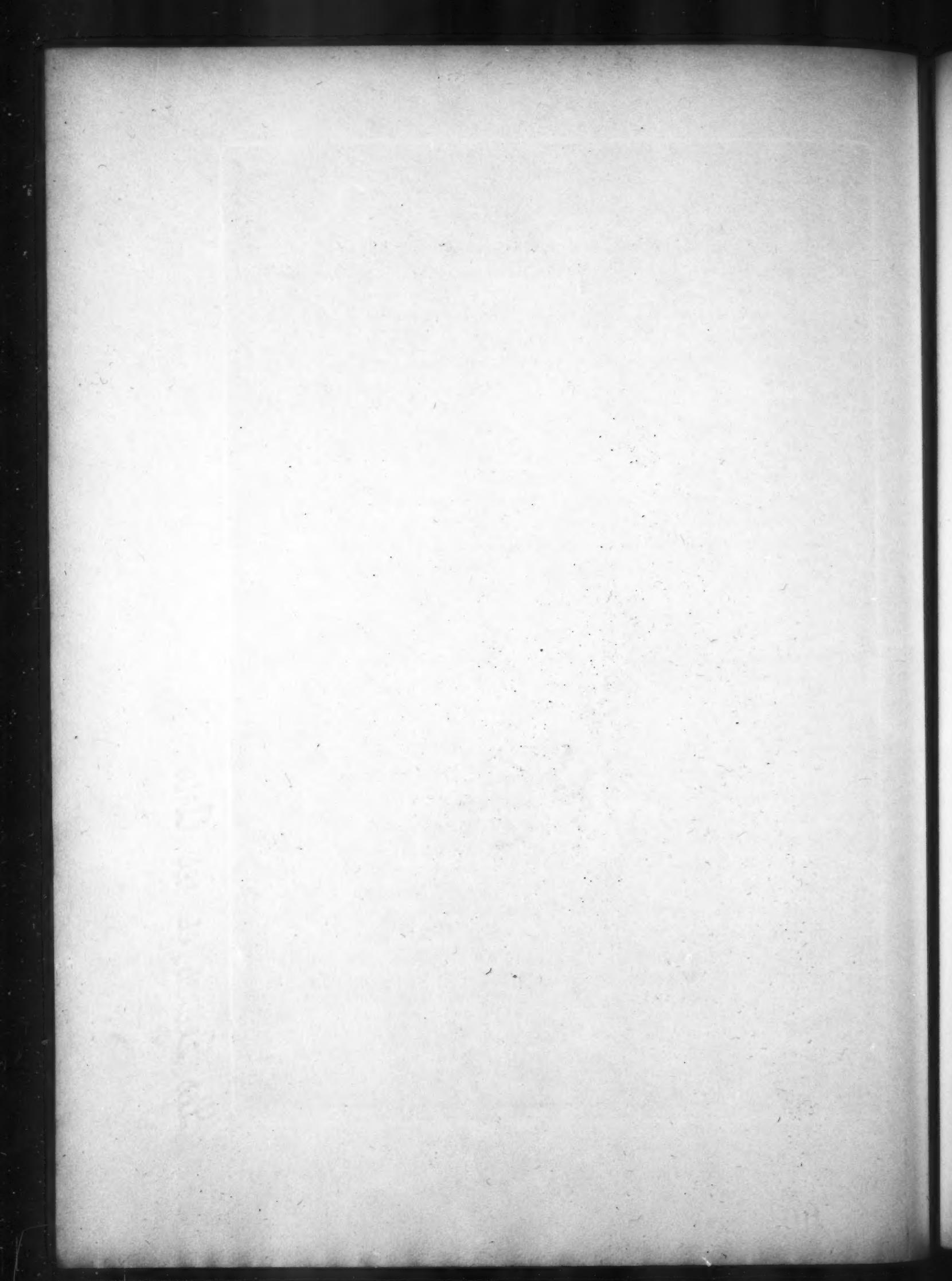
"But I very much prefer talking about you. I am inclined to think with Marshal Saxe, only in a different sense, that battles are won with the foot."

"Then they must also be lost sometimes in the same fashion," I reply, laughing, "and I begin to hope that Mademoiselle Féline's defeat is decisive."





Albert Lynch



He looked at me in astonishment for a moment. And then I saw he was inclined to misinterpret me altogether, for taking my hand he pressed it to his lips.

(Between ourselves, dear Mrs. Nevil, I think he would have done as much to my foot, if I had allowed him.)

"Then swear that your wife is quite wrong in thinking you are in love with her," I cried, leaving my hand in his. Was I not fighting for Claire?

"In love with Féline!" he exclaimed, with all the scornful zeal of a man who hastens to burn the idol before which he had once bowed down. "I, in love with an actress! I, who have a horror of everything artificial! No, I went through that phase of weakness ten years ago! I was in love then, madly in love, with an actress who was positively ugly off the stage, but who became a different creature as soon as she got behind the foot-lights. Her insignificant eyes gleamed with expression, her hoarse, unmusical voice vibrated in tones that thrilled one's soul. At an age at which most women take the parts of duennas, she was still playing heroines, and playing them with a power and passion that made one declare she was better than young, that she was inspired. I paid my tribute to Falsehood in her person. As Musset says, one must needs love everything here below, to find out what one loves most. And the things I love most now are quick wits and a frank nature."

"That is fortunate," I rejoined, "for Claire has both."

"She can hardly have the latter, I think, since she has been sulking, instead of telling me that she was silly enough to be jealous; for that is what you wish me to understand, I suppose. Jealous of a Maypole like Féline, when she knows I only admire little dainty women. A Maypole too, crowned with a mop of tow! I, who think all women should be dark-haired."

I remembered that his wife had said : "He admires only blondes," and I laughed.

"Why are you laughing at me? Can't you understand that one may be grateful to a fine actress for a success one owes partly to her, without falling in love with her as a woman?"

And he muttered something impertinent that I could not quite catch about the delusions of Philistines and school-girls.

Just at this moment Claire appeared, leading her little daughter, and announcing the important news that the lessons had resulted in two good marks. I managed to whisper, as I kissed her, that I had proof positive of her husband's absolute indifference to Féline. With what a beaming look of gratitude she answered me!

April 11th.

Odette, Odette, it may be true that you were fighting for Claire. But are you quite sure that you triumph solely on Claire's account? I admit your success as a deviser of antidotes. But have you been wholly devoted to your friend's interests in the matter? Take care. The hostility of the little Clairette to you may well be that of a faithful dog, who scents danger to his master long before the enemy declares himself.

April 25th.

I, an enemy to Claire! What an absurdity I have written down! I am really fond of her, very fond of her, though not quite to such an extent as I used to be, perhaps because she is less interesting, perhaps because I am more exacting. Is it my fault that she is absorbed in the child to the neglect of every one else? Is it my fault that she cannot pass a day without going to see her mother, who unfailingly reminds her every morning that her husband is a dangerous freethinker, a perverted genius, an unpractical dreamer, instead of striving, by wise tolerance, to heal the breach between them?

Is it my fault if she is so occupied with petty duties that she cannot spare much time for me, and that she has herself appointed her husband to be my guide through Paris? For I am exploring Paris with all the zeal of a tourist, and all the delight I remember feeling as a little school-girl, when I was taken out on holidays to see the Louvre and Notre-Dame.

And M. Rénal is always ready for one of these excursions. "Don't you want a cicerone to-day, dear Mrs. Nevil? You can't imagine what a service

you are doing me in making me acquainted with my native city. Let us set out on a voyage of discovery."

If I hesitate for a moment Claire settles the question, and Max and I are off together, doing the lions like two country cousins. Sometimes he carries a Baedeker by way of a joke, but he himself is the most perfect of guides and companions. We never take the carriage Claire offers, we prefer such eccentric modes of locomotion as tramcars and river-steamers. The steamers are my special delight. It is delicious to glide along the water in the gathering mists of evening, when the lights kindle one after another along the banks, and a thousand different coloured lanterns are mirrored below, to see what is left of old Paris rising dimly along the quays, like a scene from the *Pré-aux-Clercs* or the *Tour de Nesle*. I lose all sense of time and of reality, and only feel vaguely that I am drifting along in pleasant company towards some unknown bourne that attracts me strangely. My *cavaliere servente* is always by my side, watching over me, and ready with some little attention, as when, the other evening, he insisted on wrapping me in a shawl in spite of my resistance. A stout matron behind us, who had been wrangling with her husband ever since we started, said in a reproachful tone : " See how attentive that gentleman is to his wife ! I wish some people were more like him."

" Pshaw," retorted her partner, glancing at us, " bride and bridegroom ! I should like to see them ten years hence ! "

I pretended not to hear. Max looked at me with a smile. Happily it was growing dusk, and my blush was not too evident.

Sometimes we linger in the museum till the curators turn us out, and we are the last to leave. How delightful to find that we have the same tastes, that we agree on all questions of art !

I remember going one day last winter to the British Museum with my sisters-in-law and Lord Melton. The latter continued a discussion of his own horses before the horses of Phidias. The Parthenon marbles in their doleful prison of four blank red walls, under a dim, sepulchral light, make one realize all the horrors of exile. As I gazed at them, the whole procession, nude horsemen, maidens in scanty peplums, flute players, and athletes, seemed to shrink and shiver with cold. I pronounced some strictures on

the Vandalism of carrying them off from their home, and said to Lord Melton that the perpetrators of such a deed deserved the vengeance of the gods they had profaned! My paganism seemed to scandalize him somewhat. He answered calmly that the friezes were crumbling away in the open air, and that Lord Elgin had interfered to save them from destruction. It is, of course, a well-known fact that all English conquest is pursued with a philanthropic motive, for the benefit of the nationalities exterminated or despoiled. Lord Melton is a type of the national spirit; he would be satisfied to see the whole world "under British protection," that is to say, confiscated for the benefit of his country.

The recollection of our little dispute came back to me yesterday in the *Galerie d'Apollon*, that wonderful casket so exquisitely adapted to the treasures it contains. The spring, a little showery still, but sparkling with sunshine, smiled in at us through the great window with the gilded balcony on which the Valois used to lean, and my companion spoke with fiery eloquence of that great period of poetry and passion, which is his favourite theme, and which he has treated in glowing verse. I, too, am a worshipper of Renaissance art.

We passed on into the *Salon Carré*, where Max told me that my smile was like that of Leonardo's women.

"Unfortunately," I said, "it must be less enigmatic to you, as Claire has been indiscreet enough to tell you all my secrets."

"Oh, no, not all. I have still a good many to discover. But it is true," he added, after a pause, "that when Claire read certain portions of your letters to me, she was not only indiscreet, but very, very imprudent."

"Why imprudent?"

"Because, for people who are entirely strange to each other, there is always a long road to travel before they reach the sort of intimacy at which we have arrived. They begin by a sort of indifference, the ice is only broken by degrees. Then they gradually become interested in each other, their mutual sympathies grow, but it takes time to reach the point of crystallization—— You have read Stendhal, haven't you?"

"Enough to know that his theory of crystallization cannot be applied to friendship. Friendship has no deceptions."

"And I am confident there is no deception in the feeling which makes me think you the most delightful woman I have ever known! All I meant to say was, that having been led to take an interest in each other before we met, we had got over the preliminaries, so to speak, beforehand, and directly we saw each other we felt——"

"That we were friends," I concluded, in the most natural tone possible.
"And I, for my part, think it was a very pleasant *dénouement!*"

"Yes, friendship is a charming thing!" he said, with a certain ironical emphasis I sometimes detect in him, to my discomfort.

"The best thing in the world, perhaps!"

"The best, certainly, with the exception of love, from which it differs less than is supposed. Friendship between a man and woman, for instance, is nothing but love in disguise."

"Unless the man happens to be married," I say, laughingly.

"Or the woman happens to be engaged to a virtuous foreigner who adores her!" adds Max in the same tone.

"Oh! but I am not engaged, at least, not to that extent," I exclaim, heedlessly.

"No? Well, so much the better. We shall be able to keep you perhaps. I feel as if I could not live without you now, and as to Claire, she looks upon you as a sort of divinity."

It is true. Poor Claire embraces me a dozen times a day, saying : "I think that, thanks to you, I have won him back. He never seems to think of *her* even—(*She* is the enemy, the dangerous Féline). He is quite different now. So kind, so affectionate, so good to me!"

I feel inclined to say : "And to me too!"

April 26th.

Odette, imprudent, perfidious, disloyal Odette, you are playing with fire like children, and like them too, you know quite well you are doing wrong. You have even burnt the tips of your fingers, though you won't allow it. It is not Paris you are in love with! You perhaps would not think it so superior to London if M. Rénal were not your guide. All those tramways and river-steamers, those means of locomotion that seem

at once so modest and so respectable, are whirling you along to destruction. You know it, and you are afraid, for you have a conscience. You are more of an Englishwoman than you supposed. A certain Mosaic commandment never ceases to ring in your ears, chanted by a voice as hard and insistant as that of your mother-in-law, and spoiling all your little escapades at the most enjoyable moment : "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his."

You find it easy enough to obey the commandment save on one point. But you know that you do envy Claire her husband, and that you have embarked in a dangerous flirtation with a man who belongs to another woman, under the pretence of saving him from the claws of Mademoiselle Féline, who is, perhaps, less dangerous than yourself, and who is certainly less guilty, for, at least, she cannot be accused of betraying confidence. Draw back while there is yet time. Resist temptation by keeping away from it.

You have Lord Melton's letters to help you. Are you not touched by the loyalty with which he holds to his bargain, never hinting at his hopes, and writing of everything rather than the one subject of which his heart is full—that simple, honest heart, incapable of treachery or deceit, and honourably free to offer itself?

May 1st.

Yes, I quite allow that Lord Melton has kept faith admirably with me, but his letters are too monotonous, and a great deal too frequent. Such unfailing regularity is equivalent to a declaration : I can never forget you! Its constant recurrence irritates me. They come on fixed days, written on foreign paper, impregnated with an odour of steam-boats, like warnings or rebukes. They recall all I most wish to forget; Beechgrove Manor, the Nevil family, that England which invites me, which awaits me. I begin to receive them with a sort of irritation, as one receives an intrusive visitor. Sometimes I slip them into my pocket unread. What is the use of opening them, when they are all alike?

Yet I feel sorry for the poor fellow, and though, respecting our compact,

he has never asked for an answer, I have written to him once. He enquired so anxiously how I spent my time, what friends I had found in Paris, etc. I told him all the facts of my daily life without reservation or equivocation, and yet I did not write the truth.

Facts in themselves are of so little importance; everything depends on the impressions they leave, and the feelings they arouse. It sounds harmless enough when one says one has been seeing the sights of Paris, or even dining three or four times a week with one's old school-friend. The portraits I sketched of Claire and her child and her husband must have made him accept them as quite a model family. From my description Max might pass for a very ordinary mortal. It ran somewhat as follows, in true passport style : Medium height, olive complexion, pointed beard, oval face, no very strongly-marked feature. I am thankful to say he is no athlete, not in the least what is usually meant by a "handsome man." He is scarcely more than a head taller than I, and I am a little woman. At a first glance, his eyes are all that is really remarkable about him, eyes that vary in colour from dark gray to green. But if M. Rénal finds himself in uncongenial company, their fires are quenched at once, leaving them dull and abstracted. It is when he fixes them on me that they are most full of their haunting eloquence, and naturally I did not insist on this detail in my guarded epistle to Lord Melton. I am not going to marry Lord Melton! Every day I find myself more and more firmly fixed in this determination, I cannot quite tell why. So he will never see the paper I spoil night and morning for my own edification.

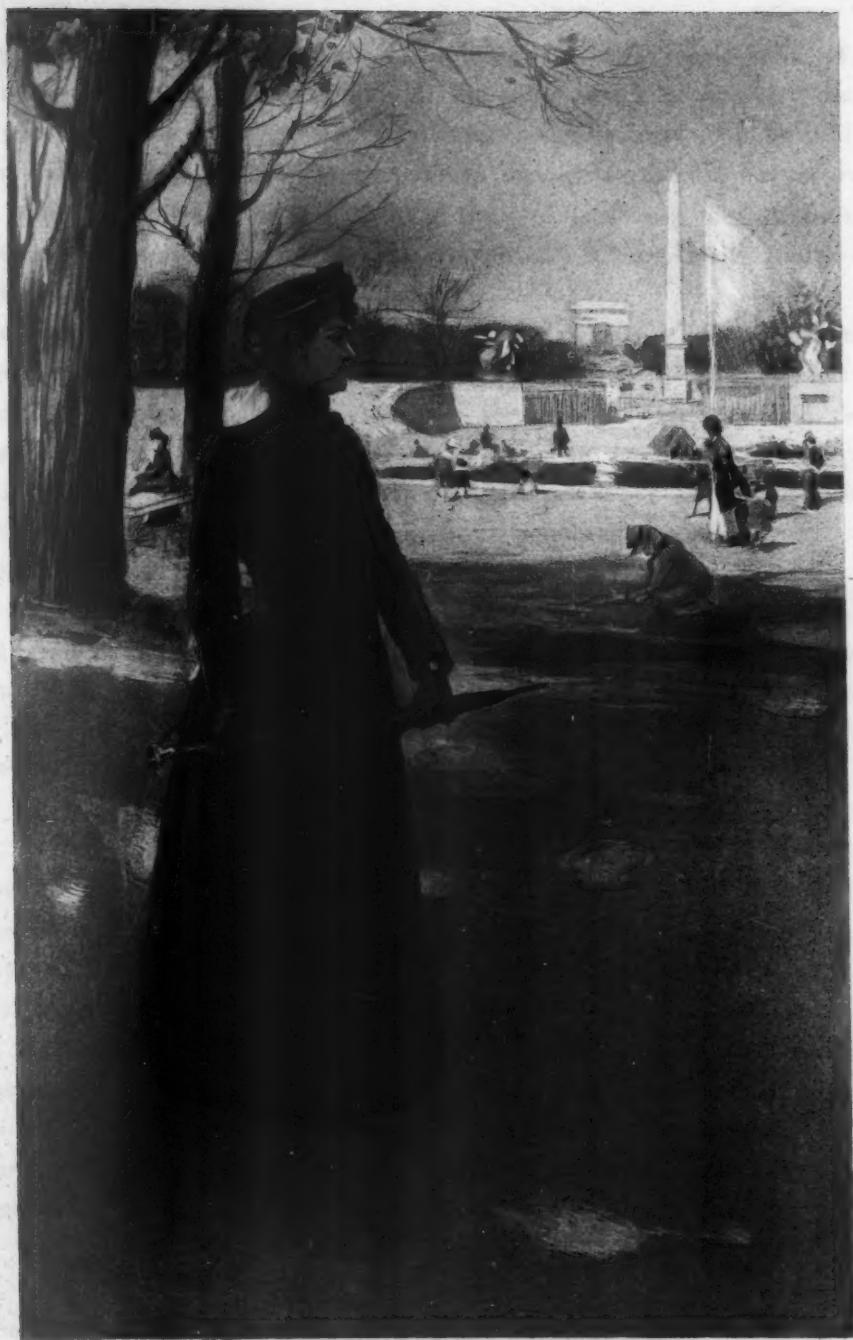
In the evening it is the wilful, reckless Odette who writes; in the morning it is Mrs. Nevil, calm, reasonable, refreshed by slumber, who tries to reduce the chaos to order. The words I have just written set me wondering over the strange variations of one's moods at different hours of the day. How one is haunted by dismal thoughts in the small hours of the morning! How one's terrors and forebodings rise up like grisly phantoms in that semi-darkness, so much more awesome than night itself! Then the sun suddenly bursts out, the birds break into song, and you laugh at the horrors that so lately oppressed you, and go forth without scruple to wander once more in the paths of a forbidden Paradise, as if you had received a

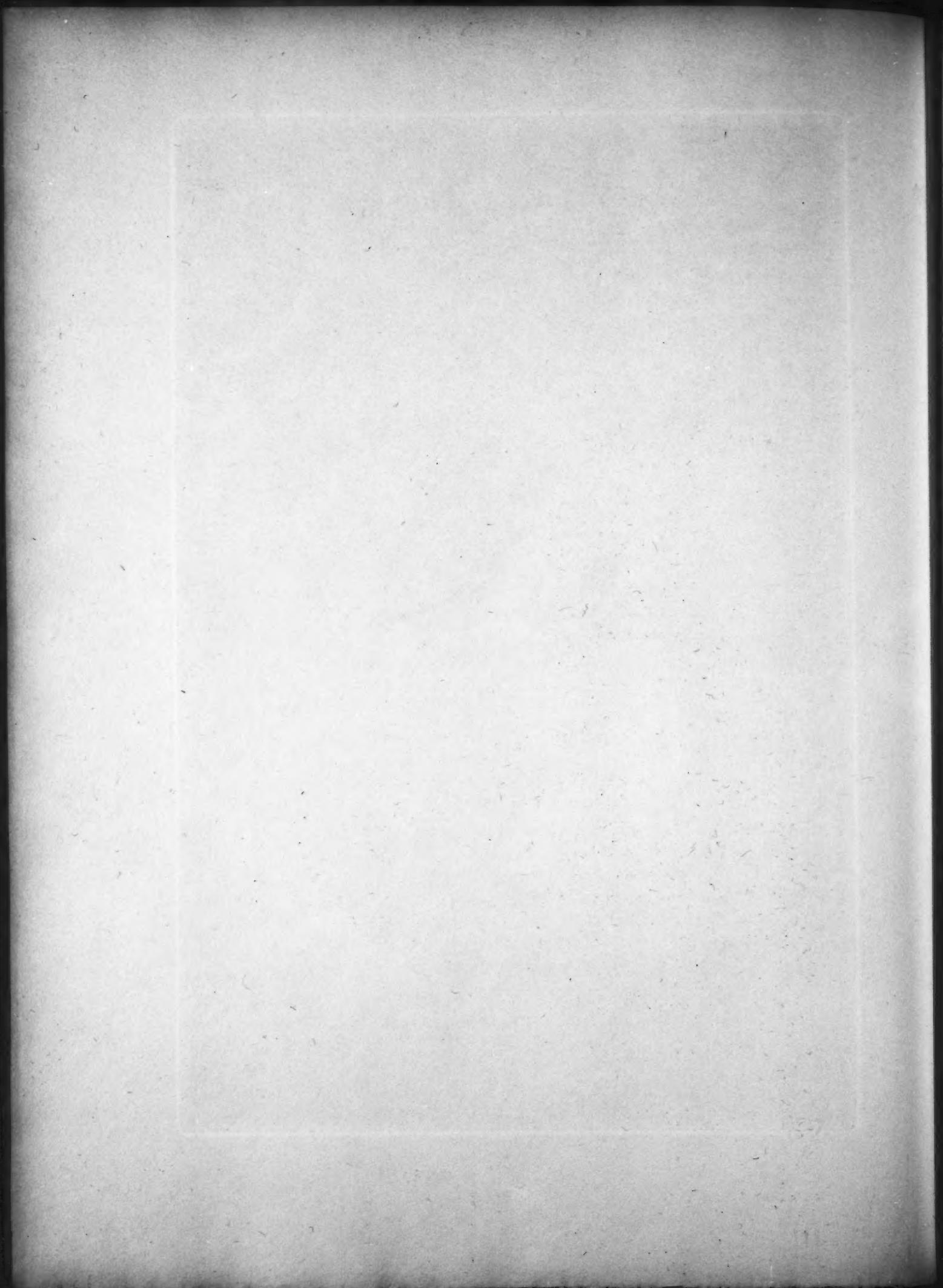
revelation from above, bidding you rise and rejoice, and taste the sweets of life.

How cheerful I felt this morning, trotting along the Boulevard, breathing in that essentially Parisian atmosphere in which so many perfumes meet, Vaillant-Rozeau's flowers, Gouache's bonbons, the cigars of the passers-by who turn to notice one. All the shop windows are full of Easter eggs, which serve as a pretext for the most delicious combinations and inventions. In what other city in the world can you find such a fairy-like abundance of azaleas, roses, lilacs, and lilies of the valley? In the course of half an hour you may catch a glimpse of every novelty in great or little art; you can study the fashion of the day in books and costume, pictures and jewels; strolling along under the shelter of your parasol, a bouquet of violets in your button-hole, you complete your education as a *Parisienne*. Can anything more delightful be imagined than a fine May morning on the Boulevard? What melancholy could resist its influences?

And I was quite alone in my little expedition this morning, so it is absurd to suppose that I should care less about Paris, without the society of M. Rénal. It is true that I had promised to end my morning by lunching with Claire, and that I was certainly looking forward to that. Well, but yesterday? Yesterday I walked in the Tuileries gardens alone, feeling as if I were borne on wings, along the alley that leads through an avenue of trim trees, just bursting into foliage, out to the Champs-Élysées, past the sparkling jets of water gleaming in the sunlight, past the pedestals on which ramp the Chevaux de Marly, past the Obelisk that rises solitary and mysterious through the rosy mist. My eyes seemed never weary of gazing at the smiling perspective that ends with the Arc de Triomphe. As I went along, I kept saying to myself that life in such surroundings was worth living. To be perfectly frank, my gaiety owed something, no doubt, to certain pleasant projects I had in my mind, among others, an evening at the Opera with Max, to hear Krauss in the *Huguenots*, and that remnant of a voice that always goes straight to my heart. One cares nothing that "the loveliest of the maids of honour" is rather elderly, that the tenor is under-sized







and knock-kneed. One can think of nothing but the music—and the fourth act—I close my eyes, and all the lofty poetry of a guilty, but heroic passion burns in my veins. Yes, even a guilty love may have its heroism and its splendour. I am grateful to Meyerbeer for having proved it. At times I almost feel as if a long train of treachery and baseness must necessarily follow in its wake. To deceive Claire, for instance—that would be horrible, unpardonable.

I am angry with M. Rénal for daring to lay a sort of significant emphasis on every word he addresses to me. There is nothing very reprehensible in his actual speech; but he shews a tendency to lead the conversation on to perilous subjects, to confide to me things he keeps from his wife on the grounds that they would grieve or scandalize her. Whatever our point of departure, generalities concerning love are certain to crop up in our talk—it is really very embarrassing sometimes.

He has lately written some splendid verses, full of fire and passion, that he read to me, and I found they were dedicated to me; the allusions were too transparent for question. I have renewed the sources of his inspiration, and I am proud of my work; but still—it is sometimes very embarrassing!

May 2nd.

Why do you, by your own coquetry and curiosity, create a situation you declare to be so very embarrassing?

Why do you take advantage of your friend's blindness? Are you not ashamed when she pours out her naïve delight at finding that her husband spends all his evenings at home now? Can you deny that Claire's drawing-room is only attractive to him, because he finds you installed there every night? And what has Lord Melton done that you should suddenly make up your mind to dismiss him? Are you not simply sacrificing him to M. Rénal?

May 3rd.

It is quite possible that it is force of contrast which makes poor Ralph seem so uninteresting, but the real reason for my determination

is, that I delight in Paris, and I see no reason why I should not stay here. I am not doing anything wrong. The influence I have over my poet is of the same platonic order as that exercised by Beatrice, or Laura, or Vittoria Colonna, and no one dreams of censuring them!

And so far from being in any way harmful to Claire, she herself says that her husband is all goodness to her, that he is just as he used to be in their happiest days. I know, too, that she now yields to him on points that she would hardly have conceded without suggestions from me. One of my most important strokes of policy was getting her to agree only to see her mother three times a week. And I have coaxed her into entertaining her husband's friends too. The bachelor dinner is now a domestic gathering, and I am always present. I delight in the intellectual *mélée* to which it leads.

Claire, I think, is less sensible of its charms. I believe she thinks all the time of her daughter's disgust at having to dine alone. Clairette, of course, bears me no good-will; she resents my opposition to her tyranny more and more with every day that passes, but thanks to my interference, we can now talk at our ease. I compose the most cunning of *menus* for these weekly *agapæ*, and am magnanimous enough to give all the credit of them to Claire. It is true that I have the advantage of her in other ways; she is always cordial and pleasant to her guests, but I am her superior in that greatest of arts; I know how to listen. Most women, I think, bore people by the trouble they take to keep up or vary conversation, the haste with which they unpack and display their petty intellectual baggage.

My cousin Rogatienné, who was a mistress of her art, devoted her energies to making those around her shine, rather than to shining herself. And this was the secret of her prestige. She was not remarkable for brilliant repartee, and none of those sharp sayings that some one, I forget who, has likened to bullets aimed at other people's ideas, were ever fired off by her. She took the line of exalting rather than that of abasing. In a very catholic society, she gleaned the most opposite opinions from one and the other, and had no special notions of her own at all, save such as were suggested by her friendships. She was so thoroughly

acquainted with the works of the various men of talent she received at her table, that she got the reputation of vast reading; as a fact, she had stored up about twenty different opinions concerning the great works of history or philosophy she was complimented on having studied. These opinions belonged to twenty of her most intimate friends, and she aired each in turn, as seemed best suited to the occasion. I bear in mind my aunt's excellent traditions, I modify them to suit myself, and I add to them certain personal advantages she lacked. In short, I am a social success!

I know that I have found favour with one of the most captious of the Saturday guests, Paul Saluces, a scoffing art critic, who has given himself the name of "The Misogynist," and who prides himself on having never been attracted by a virtuous woman, on the grounds that anything of the sort is a waste of time. He sneers at the least pretension to intelligence in the feminine animal; he holds, with Rivarol, that a woman should have the flavour of ripe fruit and the intellect of a rose! Claire, one might suppose, would come a good deal nearer to his ideal than I!

Not at all! He has forgiven me the crime of not being a fool! His opinion of Mrs. Nevil is that "all she says and does seems natural, spontaneous, and unpremeditated!" Max, of course, repeated the pretty compliment to me! I like to be admired by his friends, for I know how enormously success adds to our attractions. Franz Cramer, the musician; Delbayne, the Buddhist, traveller, and novelist; Bouguerolles, most caustic of journalists; five out of the party of eight at least are sure to pay court to me.

So much the better! He will think me all the more charming when he finds that others share his opinion! That is why I flirt more or less with them all. It is not that they all please me. Far from it! I take stock of them in my own mind, and judge them with great severity. I scorn the false pessimism which is their Shibboleth, their mask of the moment, and which at least never seems to interfere with their greedy enjoyment of all the good things of life. I note the sort of intellectual avarice of some among them, who reserve all the happy ideas and brilliant phrases by which they have won celebrity, in order to turn them into

"copy," and treat their intimates only to the exhibition of their excellent appetites and their coarse jealousies, their envy, malice, and uncharitableness towards their rivals. With some of them, "fellow-worker" seems equivalent to "enemy!" And I, in my simplicity, used to think that those who served the same God must necessarily love one another!

It is perhaps wiser never to make the acquaintance of famous men. The disenchantment which follows is not like that we receive from ordinary mortals. It is, however, more painful, for the idol falls from far greater heights!

Among Max's friends, I learn to understand Margaret's shuddering horror of Mephistopheles, "the spirit who denies!" They seem to be nothing but intellects, intelligences, the workings of which are modified by no natural emotion; shall I ever come to feel for Max the same antipathy, combined with fear, which his friends inspire in me? I am far enough from such a frame of mind at the present moment, he is not like them in all things; he has infinitely more delicacy, more spontaneity; best of all, he has a heart that shews itself at times, and his mind loses nothing by the exhibition. I have met no one I find half so interesting as he. Sometimes I fancy he is stimulated by my presence, that he wishes to shine for me, that he dedicates his powers to me, as the knights of old laid their laurels at the feet of their mistresses.

May 20th.

You are breathing an unhealthy atmosphere, my poor Odette, and whatever you may say, you are not always at your ease in it. I find you sometimes as much distressed as your friend Claire, when, between the Château-Yquem and Clos-Vougeot, certain discussions arise at the Saturday dinners on questions which to you seem too serious for table-talk. When you hear the existence of God relegated to the cloudland of a misty Pantheism, morality pronounced a purely practical obligation, human responsibility denied, the phenomenon of conscience treated as a growth of superstition and education, etc.

At such moments you are not quite sure that the conversational monotony that oppressed you in your dull Leicestershire home was the worst

of evils; you begin to feel a retrospective indulgence for the long, stupid, silent dinners at Beechgrove Manor. You are not a true radical at heart at all, but only a dissentient, which is a very different affair. Just as in the old Beechgrove days you longed to fire off some startling paradox in the thick of the drowsy commonplaces about the crops, the weather, the sermon of some local evangelist, the purchase of a dog, or the victory of a horse, so now you burn to interrupt the discussions that perplex and oppress you. You sometimes find your lips trembling to bring out some pious maxim from one of the little devotional tracts your mother-in-law used to deal round with such prodigal liberality, or read aloud to the long-suffering company, through spectacles perched at the very end of her thin nose. Those edifying leaflets certainly sent you to sleep, but I believe they were less repugnant to you than certain materialistic professions of faith. On the other side of the Channel you might have been considered a strong-minded woman; here you are the weakest of neophytes. Poor little hybrid animal, wretched little bat, your place is neither with the birds nor with the mice. It is your fate to be always out of harmony with your surroundings, and in whatsoever sect you find yourself, to feel secret affinities with its opponents.

In spite of your reluctance, your mind bows before the power of an eloquent negation. An insinuating scepticism blights its freshness. Your former ideals are overthrown.

Your principles are shaken to their foundations. When you find yourself alone after one of those discussions in which you have taken part only to raise a timid objection here and there, you begin to ask yourself: What is the good of virtue? Does it even exist? Is it not rather an ancient prejudice or a convenient police regulation, than the outcome of a divine law which bids us resist the evil promptings of our hearts? And you would fain believe this new Gospel, because your heart is set on a man who is the husband of your best friend, and who, whatever you choose to pretend, does not love you at all after the fashion of Dante, or Petrarch, or Michael Angelo. There is no trace of analogy, either in characters or situations; Beatrice was a little girl; Laura was guarded by her husband and her many children; Vittoria Colonna was

a faithful widow, whose hand her lover never dared to kiss till she was dead.

You have none of the qualities essential to platonic love, not even the advantage of being a thorough coquette, who would only find amusement in what intoxicates you. Shutting your eyes to the dangers that threaten, you drift along, listening to the seductive voice that whispers sentimental verse in your ear, verse that like music expresses or implies as much as any positive declaration. And all the time you are expecting the definite avowal that you know must come, and that you half dread and half desire. You are just what is most commonplace and most uninteresting in a woman, timid and audacious at the same time. One of these days you will stifle the uneasy cries of your conscience, and we shall see then how long you will keep your footing on the slippery paths of your so-called poetic passion.

May 29th.

How could I possibly foresee the trick that little monkey Clairette has played me? It is all her fault. Satan has made her his instrument. He very soon wins the ear of little girls. Almost as soon as they can walk and lisp, they are little women, capable of all the stratagems of their elders.

The keenest thirst for vengeance, the subtlest perception in an outraged wife, could have suggested no more effectual way of damaging a rival than that adopted by Clairette the other day. My humiliation came about in this way. Every one knows that even the possessors of the most luxuriant hair are not independent of certain artificial aids. The damp affects your curls, or the fashionable coiffure of the moment demands the pernicious use of hot irons. Like other women, I am not above such little artifices, harmless enough, if properly concealed. Unfortunately, I was guilty the other evening of that greatest of crimes, I allowed myself to be found out. I lost a false curl, which I had, no doubt, fastened carelessly. When I became conscious of my loss, it was too late; Clairette had been playing on the floor with her mother's little dog. She picked up the damning lock, and slyly concealed it, biding her time to carry it

to her papa. I saw her suddenly climb on M. Rénal's knee, and place it in his hand, saying in her little high-pitched voice : "What is this, papa? I found it behind Mrs. Nevil's chair."

A wild, well-nigh irresistible desire to seize and strangle the malicious little elf swept over me! Clairette, degraded to nursery meals, curtailed of many privileges through my advice, was evidently bent on vengeance! As she spoke she glanced at me out of the corner of her eye, enjoying the delicious pleasure of annoying me. Her father looked at her absently, then with an expression of surprise, that seemed suddenly to grasp the situation. Affecting not to notice it, he laid aside the alien curl that had perhaps fired his poetic imagination on my head. Finally, in a tone of great severity, he bid the dreadful child go and play. But Clairette had gained her end. It availed me nothing that Claire administered such an energetic scolding to the little scourge as to entirely dissipate my first suspicions. For a moment I confess I thought she had instigated the insult. But no, she is much more ingenuous than her daughter! I interceded for Clairette in a half-hearted manner, I tried to treat the whole thing lightly, even to laugh it off; but inwardly, I raged with an anger and mortification utterly disproportioned to the puerile disaster.

I felt the whole evening as if Max were scrutinizing my head, and concluding that the whole was an erection of false curls, and that I was given to such impositions, speculating perhaps as to whether I painted my face, and how far my other poor attractions were natural. Tears rose in my eyes, tears of rage. I felt myself aspersed, calumniated; I longed to be called on to explain, to have a chance of proving and certifying that all my hair was not liable to be found on the carpet! But I was obliged to accept my defeat, to respond amiably to the perfidious "good-night" of Mademoiselle Clairette, who came holding up her knowing little face to be kissed, when her mother ordered her off to bed. She fired a parting shot as she saluted me. Bringing me back the wretched curl, she remarked, loudly enough to be heard by her father : "It is yours, isn't it? Why was mamma angry with me for finding it?" Then, tugging at the golden fleece that tumbles on to her own shoulders, she added : "My hair won't come off, not if I pull it ever so hard. Nor will mamma's."

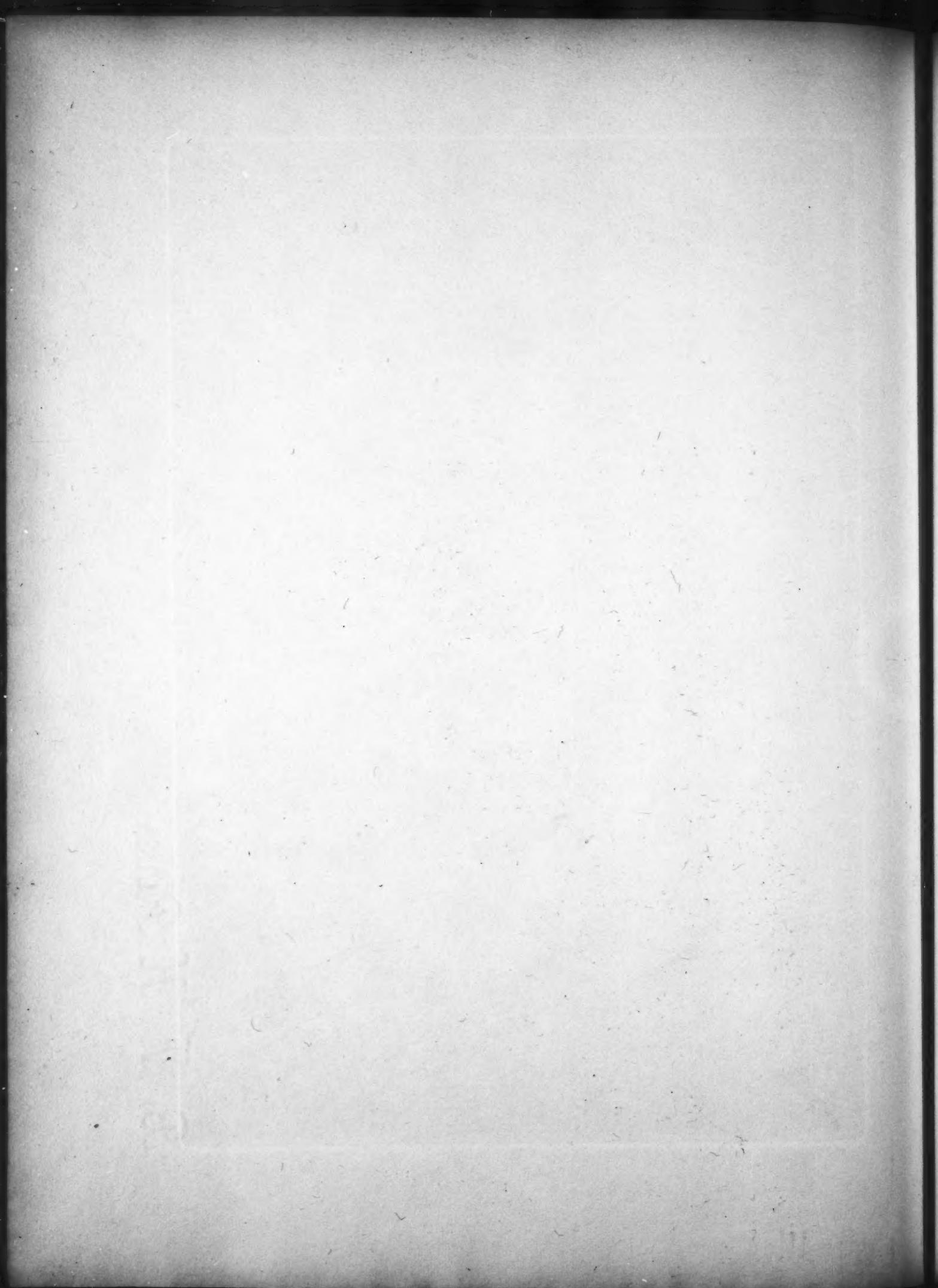
The triumphantly malicious emphasis with which she delivered herself was indescribable! I thought I was going to faint, especially when I fancied I detected a slight quiver of Max's moustache, as he sat imperturbably reading his paper. It was ridiculous, of course, but after this little scene, I could not close my eyes all night. I lay awake, turning over all sorts of devices by which I might remove the false impression of which I was the victim. It was no very difficult matter, I found, and towards morning I felt so far comforted as to fall into a deep sleep, which removed all traces of my tears. For, I am ashamed to say, I wept copiously!

The next morning the Rénals were to fetch me to go to the Salon. I need not exaggerate my sins, so I must here record that I honestly intended *both* my friends to assist at the little theatrical display which, as Fate would have it, Max alone witnessed! (Claire had remained in the carriage, and sent her husband up to fetch me.) He found me quite ready, with only my hat to put on, and this I managed to do so clumsily, that my hair, twisted up with elaborate negligence, escaped from the tortoise-shell pin that fastened it, and fell like a mantle over my shoulders.

Of course I exclaimed at my maid's carelessness, laid all the blame on her innocent head, and begged M. Rénal to wait five minutes while she repaired the mischief. Was he deceived by my little stratagem? I hardly think so. However this may be, I had scarcely reckoned on such an effect as my floating locks produced. I made for the door, honestly embarrassed, though triumphant, when Max suddenly caught me in his arms, and showered kisses on the loosened masses of hair. With great difficulty I tore myself away from him, and shutting myself into my room, sent him word that I did not feel well enough to go out. I don't know what excuses he made to Claire, but she came in later to ask how I was, and evidently suspected nothing. She may well have believed I really felt ill, for my face and hands burned as with a fever.

And this momentous result has been brought about merely by the malice of a little girl! The fastidious delicacy of our affectionate friendship has broken down completely. Henceforth, however we may avoid all mention of it, there has been a moment which neither of us can ever





forget. The whole future must be coloured by it. The very thought of meeting him again fills me with shame.

June 1st.

The platonic fiction has fallen to pieces even sooner than I expected, and the fault was mine. It is the old story, old as the garden of Eden. The unconscious Clairette may have played the part of serpent, but the woman tempted the man, and the man fell.

Can you give any satisfactory explanation of your conduct after the fateful interview? Why did you at once sit down and write to Lord Melton, formally refusing his offer of marriage, and declaring your intention of settling in France? Why were you so utterly unmoved by the letter he wrote you in reply? A letter admirable in substance, if somewhat heavy and negligent in form? How could you fail to be touched by the chivalry with which, to spare you, he suppressed his own suffering. Your resolution hardly surprises him; he had never much hope; he will try to bear his trouble like a man, he will not weary you with vain regrets, he wishes you all happiness with the man you have chosen. So writes poor Lord Melton, never doubting that a projected marriage is at the root of the decision. Could he insult you by imagining that you reject him because of your guilty passion for a married man, whose wife is your friend?

June 5th.

Yes, it is true, I am wicked and cruel to Lord Melton. But in rejecting the rank and wealth he offered me, I felt as if I had somewhat redeemed my weakness by an act of energy. And I am free, I have cast away an irksome chain. If I have given away my heart, no one shall ever learn the secret. I cannot forget Max's kisses; they make me shudder at the thought of belonging to another man, but this does not oblige me to fall weakly into his arms. Why should I not remain my own mistress? Am I so infirm of purpose that I need the pretence of a semi-engagement to guard me? And I am delivered once for all from those importunate letters that used to come regularly as clockwork—four laboured pages, written in a great schoolboy hand, and with about as much style as a race-card!

Life is sad enough. We have no need to burden ourselves with useless obligations. Yes, life is sad! And difficult! Why am I not religiously inclined? That would be a way out of all my difficulties. A convent—a French convent, of course. I should thus escape the danger of meeting Max again, the pain of grieving Ralph—for, whatever I may say, it *does* pain me. I should disappear in a decent, not to say heroic, fashion, leaving tender memories behind me. The gipsy-eyed Odette a Sister of Mercy! There is something decidedly piquant in the idea! But oh! no! I could not. I could not part with my hair, of which I am prouder than ever since he shewed his appreciation of it. I will keep those tresses, witnesses of a moment of rapture, guilty indeed, but which I cannot altogether regret. I have thought of little else for the last three days. Under various pretexts, I have avoided Max, and kept away from Claire's house. But such a state of things cannot last. And perhaps I exaggerate the gravity of the situation. He was guilty of a moment's recklessness, for which he will presently ask my pardon. I will promise to forget it, and we may resume our former friendship, only more guardedly. No more *tête-à-tête!* - As a last resource, I can always excite Claire's jealousy for my defence.

TH. BENTZON.

(*To be continued.*)





BIRDS OF PARADISE

The name of these lovely creatures, so dazzling in the richness of their plumage, and so justly counted amongst the most admired of all birds, seems to shed a light that throws into strong relief certain tendencies of the human mind. For, as we write it, how can we help reflecting on the extraordinary indifference of men towards the marvels that surround them? As a generale rule, the mere fact of habitually seeing attractive or splendid objects would seem commonly to destroy all idea of investigation. For whole centuries, amongst the most advanced and most civilised nations, no one but a few philosophers took the slightest interest in plants or animals. No one was concerned with living animals except in so far as they satisfied material needs. No one's attention was arrested except by some striking peculiarity, some very special characteristic or habit. Suddenly, however, curiosity awoke in Europe; it was at the time when travellers brought home from the tropics strange plants characterised by surprising peculiarities, or birds and insects whose rare beauty and splendid plumage were unknown in cold or temperate climates.

After the discovery of America there arose a multitude of navigators, fired with zeal to explore the world, and proud of being the first to land on shores whose existence was as yet known to none.

Could these men of the sixteenth century fail to be captivated by those parts of the world where nature displays her greatest splendours? No, indeed! Very soon some of them began to take pleasure in making known the superb butterflies of Guiana and Brazil, of the East Indies or the Sunda Islands, and in bringing home spoil in the shape of birds of most brilliant and varied plumage. So far as we know, the taste for natural history collections did not exist before. Now, however, museums were soon formed, and one city vied with another in securing the rarest specimens.

But people were not content with simply contemplating their new treasures. Foreign plants and animals were made the pretext of study—at first, it is true, of a somewhat elementary kind; but at any rate the most attractive subjects were made familiar by pictures and descriptions more or less accurate. Enthusiasts thought to win glory by composing enormous works which involved considerable expense. It was a ruinous time for authors. The celebrated Aldrovandi, who belonged to one of the richest families of Bologna, spent his entire fortune on an enterprise of this kind, and finally died in a hospital.

* * *

At the time when birds of Paradise first began to be known in Europe, those who wrote about them sought out the most extravagant expressions with which to describe these noble creatures. They tried to find words of magic suited to the extraordinary brilliance of the birds. We read of striking contrasts of colour in the same bird, with delicate gradations of an almost incomparable subtlety; tufts of light delicate feathers above the wings, aerial plumes displayed like a fan or shield; behind, a stream of feathers forming a train of supreme elegance, and in the midst of the train two long threads curved like tendrils. Certain species are characterised by other peculiarities, such as feathers springing from the head, back, or shoulders, their iridescent hues gleaming with metallic lustre, and producing

the most wonderful effect, quite unlike anything to be found in other birds. And if admiration for hitherto unknown beauties was somewhat lavishly expended, the feeling was exalted still higher when confronted with beings that were always accompanied by a whole train of legends. These legends were collected by sailors, and received in Europe with general appreciation. To men who counted themselves among the number of the most enlightened, they furnished material for animated debates, keen controversies, and even quarrels and insults. At that time people thought little of infringing the rules of courtesy in scientific discussions.

What was the real home of these birds? No one knew, and no one cared. In those days people's notions of geography were for the most part of the haziest, and every one was satisfied if any number of wonderful products were assigned to the "Indies" or the "Great Indies"—those countries of spice where men of greed and resolution went to get rich.

When Europeans first visited the Malay Archipelago they found the traffic in birds of Paradise already flourishing. The land of their origin was New Guinea, where the natives were in the habit of securing these pretty feathered creatures by means of their bows and arrows, and then trading in them with their neighbours. Birds of Paradise were much in demand as articles of personal adornment. The Rajahs of the different islands delighted in ornamenting their head-dresses, their garments, and their weapons with the feathers. But the surprising thing about these lovely birds was that they had no feet; yet every one took care to conceal the fact that the natives mutilated their victims by tearing off the feet. On the Europeans expressing astonishment at this peculiarity, the black inhabitants of the coast, who were touched by, if not quite converted to, Islamism, replied that these creatures never perched on earth like ordinary birds. They dwelt in Paradise,—the Paradise of Mohammed!

Such stories seemed by no means improbable; so strong is man's love for the marvellous, the impossible, the supernatural—in a word, for all that is less wonderful than reality. Incredible as it sounds, no one was at a loss to explain the manners and customs of birds without feet. They lived on vapour and dew, they slept while flying, or occasionally

while suspended to the branches of a tree by the tendril-feathers of their tails. In their wooing, the male and female remained united in a delicious embrace. Imagination, thus let loose, knew not where to stop; it was declared that the male was furnished with a broad hollow on his back, in which the female laid and hatched her eggs. There was a kind of poetry in the conception of two beings becoming thus inseparable in order to ensure the welfare of their progeny. It was further added that, for such creatures, movement was their only existence, air their only element, and that it would be death to them to touch the earth.

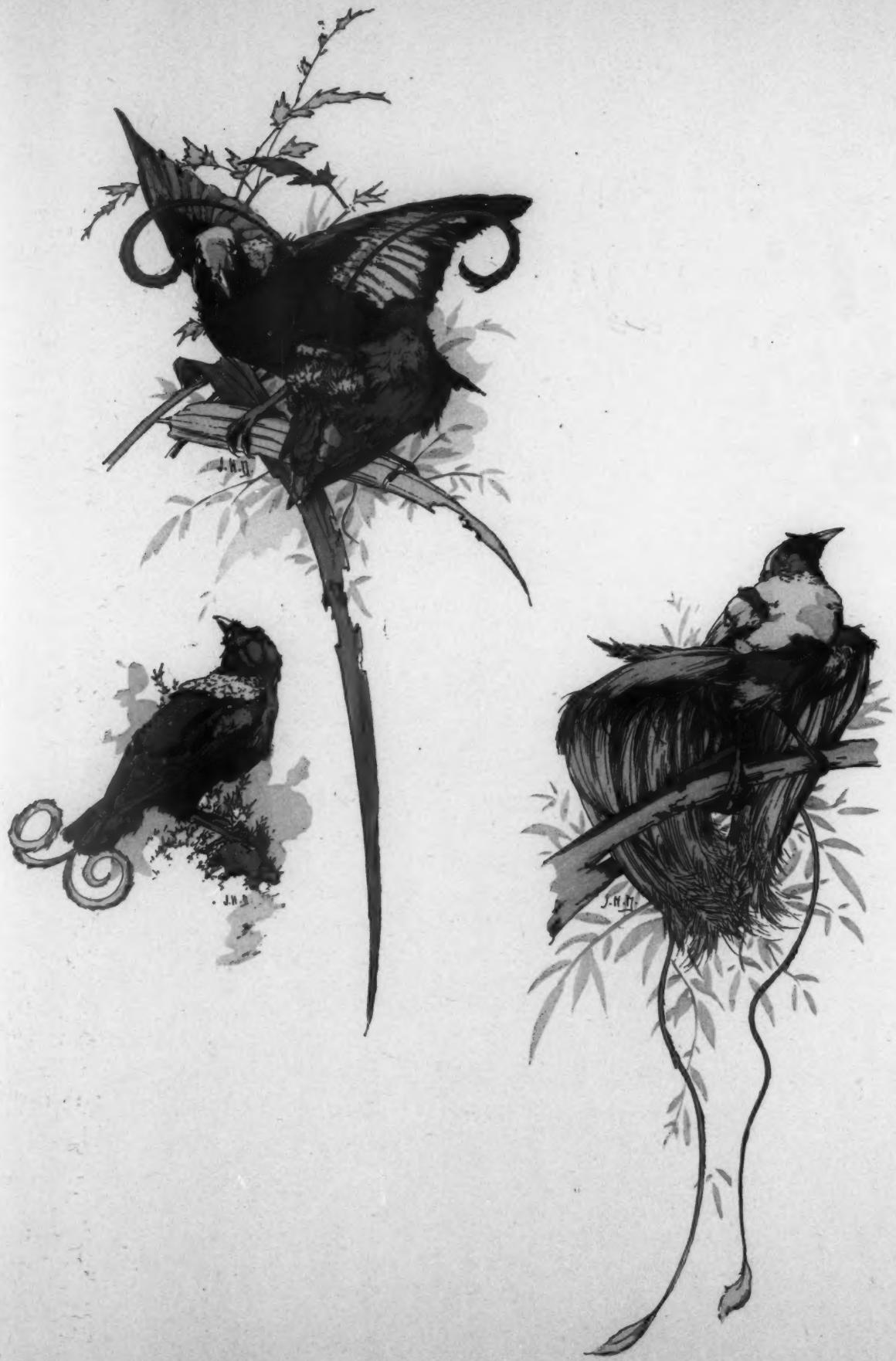
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In their first intercourse with the Malay traders, the Europeans in acquiring these famous, strange, and wonderful birds, heard them called "birds of God." Was this going too far? The Portuguese were content to call them *Passaros de sol*—"birds of the Sun." The Dutch accepted the more widely known name, "birds of Paradise." Up to 1760, when Linnaeus classified the largest species under the name of *Paradisea Apoda*, no complete specimen had been seen in Europe. Probably the fantastic legends had been pretty freely criticised for some time previously, but all the same the fact that they originated in the land of the Papuans or on the islands of the Malay Archipelago, seemed, in our civilised world, to enhance the value of plumage which formed such a charming adornment.

Such is the prestige of beauty that no one was unwilling to credit these fair creatures with noble manners, refined habits, and an organisation altogether above vulgar necessities.

At first the feathers of a bird of Paradise were reckoned amongst the most costly treasures. In every age women have been eager for ornaments, and an ornament somewhat out of the ordinary and not procurable by every one has, of course, always given rise to flattering jealousies and envyings.

In the early days of the present century, a lady wearing a bird of Paradise in her head-dress was still remembered. When ladies of a certain age adopted the fashion of the turban, it was a sign of the most exquisite taste to adorn it with a bird of Paradise whose eyes were set





with precious stones, so that emeralds, rubies, or diamonds glistened beneath the light of the chandeliers.

In more recent times, a certain great lady, who had enjoyed considerable social success at the time of the Consulate, one day called her grand-daughter to her side, and made the girl's heart beat with expectation by broken and hesitating words which seemed to promise a great deal. At last, after some suspense, she said :

"My dear child, to you whom I love so warmly, to you my favourite, I wish to bequeath the ornament that was my greatest triumph in the days of my youth."

The young lady, with eyes wide open, expected to see a diamond necklace, or at least a string of pearls, but the grandmother, ignorant of modern tastes, continued :

"I will give you my bird of Paradise, which used to be so much admired."

The poor young thing's heart sank within her, and she had not even the courage to thank her grandmother for this delicate attention.

Ah well! to-day the plumage of this famous bird is quite despised. It is no longer to be seen in a drawing-room; but notwithstanding this universal disdain, we were much surprised to learn that in the feather trade, birds of Paradise are still a good investment. According to the beauty of the plumage, they are valued respectively at from fifty to a hundred francs. But we must not linger any more over the legends and fashions of bygone days. It is more interesting to follow these famous birds, who, according to ancient and poetic custom, will always be called birds of Paradise, into the scenes of their actual life, and to see them in their native lands. And first we must form some idea of these countries which, until our own day, had never been explored.

* * *

These birds come from the largest island in the world—the island which on our maps bears the somewhat unfortunate name of New Guinea. It was the sight of the natives that inspired this name. They were quite black, and to superficial observers recalled the inhabitants of that part

of the coast of Africa which navigators knew already under the name of Guinea. But for multitudes of navigators, New Guinea is the land of the Papuans, or indeed one might almost say the land of birds of Paradise.

Situated in the southern hemisphere, to the north of Australia, from which it is only separated by Torres Strait, the island touches the equator in the west and is not more than ten or eleven degrees distant from it in the east. The length from east to west is at least three times that from north to south; and the coast is deeply indented with bays and gulfs of varying width, while all around are multitudes of little isles and islets. The outline of Papua was only by slow degrees determined with exactitude, and indeed some of the details are probably not yet completely accurate.

According to all the historical documents, the first Europeans who sighted certain points on the coast of the island were navigators from Portugal. It is recorded that in 1526 Jorge de Meneses, sailing from Malacca to the Moluccas, driven by currents, and hopelessly astray from his course, at last touched at a point 200 leagues beyond Amboyna or Ternate, inhabited by a people called Papuans. The record of this unexpected discovery was preserved by a Portuguese pilot, Francisco Rodriguez, who was at that time stationed at the Moluccas. The Spaniards were rivals of the Portuguese in the matter of exploring unknown regions. In 1528 Saavedra had sighted the great island with its black inhabitants, and had followed the coast line for at least a hundred leagues, dreaming of riches no less than of glory, for he concluded, no doubt from misleading indications, that the country abounded with gold, and, wishing to increase the importance of his expedition, he gave to the land the name of Isla del Oro—Isle of Gold.

But it is Ynigo Ortiz de Retes who claims to have been, in 1545, the principal discoverer of New Guinea. He had cruised along the north coast for a distance of 230 leagues without coming to its end, every now and then being greeted with a Papuan arrow. He was the first to designate this vast island by the name of New Guinea. At first the navigators invariably landed on the northern and western coasts, and it was not till 1606 that Luis de Torres, lieutenant of a small squadron commanded

by Quiros, and charged with the exploration of the Australasian islands, determined to pass through the strait which has ever since immortalised the brave sailor by bearing his name; it was a splendid venture and was looked upon as the most audacious and the most skilful enterprise ever undertaken by the Spaniards in the Pacific Ocean. It has been ascertained that from 1606 onwards the only part of New Guinea that was not well-known was the eastern coast. In the course of the last century and the beginning of this, the voyages of Bougainville, d'Entrecasteaux, Cook, Dumont d'Urville, and numerous others have added more exact details about the different portions of the island.

Quite recently, between 1873 and 1876, the bearings of that part of the shore to the south-east, on which no navigators had hitherto ventured to land, were taken by Captain Moresby of the Royal Navy of England. Thus the general survey of the land of the Papuans may be said to be practically completed.

At the present day travellers to New Guinea usually start from the Moluccas, and generally from the island of Ternate. After proceeding for some little distance, they find themselves confronted by a long stretch of coast, more or less under the dominion of Rajahs converted to Mohammedanism, vassals of the sultan of Tidore, and paying tribute to their suzerain in slaves, pearls, shells, or birds of Paradise.

The coasting of New Guinea has always been difficult, the south shore being one of the most dangerous in the world. We need scarcely remind our readers of the disaster that overtook Admiral Dumont d'Urville; it was on June 1st, 1840, that the corvettes *L'Astrolabe* and *La Zélée* ran aground on a spot near the island known as Toud Island. For several days the two ships remained in the most critical situation, grating on the coral reefs, till at last the *Astrolabe* heeled over on her side; the situation looked desperate and they began to talk of abandoning the two corvettes. The officers and crew made up their minds that there was but one hope of escape, to embark in the boats, taking with them their most valuable possessions, and coast round Australia with a view to reaching Sydney. The captain alone remained obdurate and immovable. He insisted on waiting. The tides became stronger, and at last, on the night of June 4th, the sea

rose higher than it had done on the previous days. After unheard-of efforts in struggling against the currents, which threatened every moment to cast the ships on to the reefs, where they would have been dashed to pieces, after incessant toil day and night, when both officers and men performed prodigies of valour, the *Astrolabe* and the *Zélée* were at last got afloat. A knowledge of the channels was still necessary, but very soon the two corvettes emerged safely from Torres Strait, the crews of both being thankful to have escaped a terrible disaster.

Since then, scores of ships have continually passed through this famous strait, but only through following the route marked out by buoys. Captains are still very careful not to venture by night into the dangers of this winding channel. According to the reports of sailors, it is nothing but a confused mass of islands, reefs, and sandbanks. When the tide goes down these all emerge from the sea, standing erect and prominent, as though to strike fear into the heart of the boldest voyagers.

From its geographical position one might suppose that New Guinea was nothing more than an offshoot of Australia. Nothing separates the island from the continent but a comparatively shallow channel, so that one would readily believe that, at no very remote age, a depression of the land caused Papua to become an island.

But in certain respects New Guinea seems to possess a vegetation quite her own, and an animal world represented by the characteristic types of the region. In the present state of our scientific knowledge we are astonished at the great differences in flora and fauna between the two countries. In reality we are by no means in possession of sufficient facts to enable us to know the past. So that there is no certainty about the various changes that may have taken place, in the course of centuries, in the extent and configuration of the Australian continent and the more or less adjacent islands. The north of Australia is as yet very little known, and it is the further side of the land of the birds of Paradise that is most frequently visited. During the last few years, several species of animals have been found in New Guinea whose types had previously been considered peculiar to Australia, and this inclines us to adhere to the old belief in the original union of the great island and the continent.

On the supposition that Torres Strait was not formed until a comparatively recent age, it seems not impossible that it will one day disappear. Slowly, but surely, the coral insects are building up their colonies as high as the sea level. The sand deposited in the coral-branches is accumulating and has nearly reached the surface of the water. Mangrove trees grow very rapidly on such islands. Thus, as the land gains little by little, there will come a time when the traveller, passing from Australia to Papua, will no longer recognize any boundary between the two great ocean countries.

For the last twenty years, naturalists have been busy with explorations in New Guinea. Russel Wallace was the first who succeeded in penetrating at all into the secrets of animal life in this part of the globe. D'Albertis and Beccari of Genoa won celebrity by their studies of the geography and natural history of Papua and the adjacent islands. Our countrymen Raffray and Laglaize have visited certain parts of this vast country, and recorded their valuable observations. Some unpublished papers, placed at my disposal by M. Laglaize, enable me to give a slight sketch of the natural features of the great island which is the home of our brilliant birds of Paradise.

New Guinea is watered by a multitude of streams scarcely navigable by canoes. As yet we know of only two rivers of any importance—in the north the Amboernoh discovered by Mr. Morris, Resident at Ternate, and in the south the Fly, which has been navigated up to a certain point by M. d'Albertis.

Towards its mouth, which is encumbered with innumerable islets, the Fly becomes winding and picturesque. On the banks of its lower course there are majestic forests and superb masses of great trees; indeed, according to M. d'Albertis, the shore is covered with trailing creepers, ferns growing from the tree trunks, orchids suspended from the branches, huge flowers with scarlet petals, forming necklaces and girdles for the giant trees,—all combining to produce an incomparable luxuriance of beauty. Higher up the river's course the scene changes, the shores are barren, the aspect of the successive regions becomes monotonous, and though the forest reappears, it is a forest of no grandeur.

There are very few descriptions of parts other than the shores. The opinion of M. Laglaize is that New Guinea will remain unknown longer

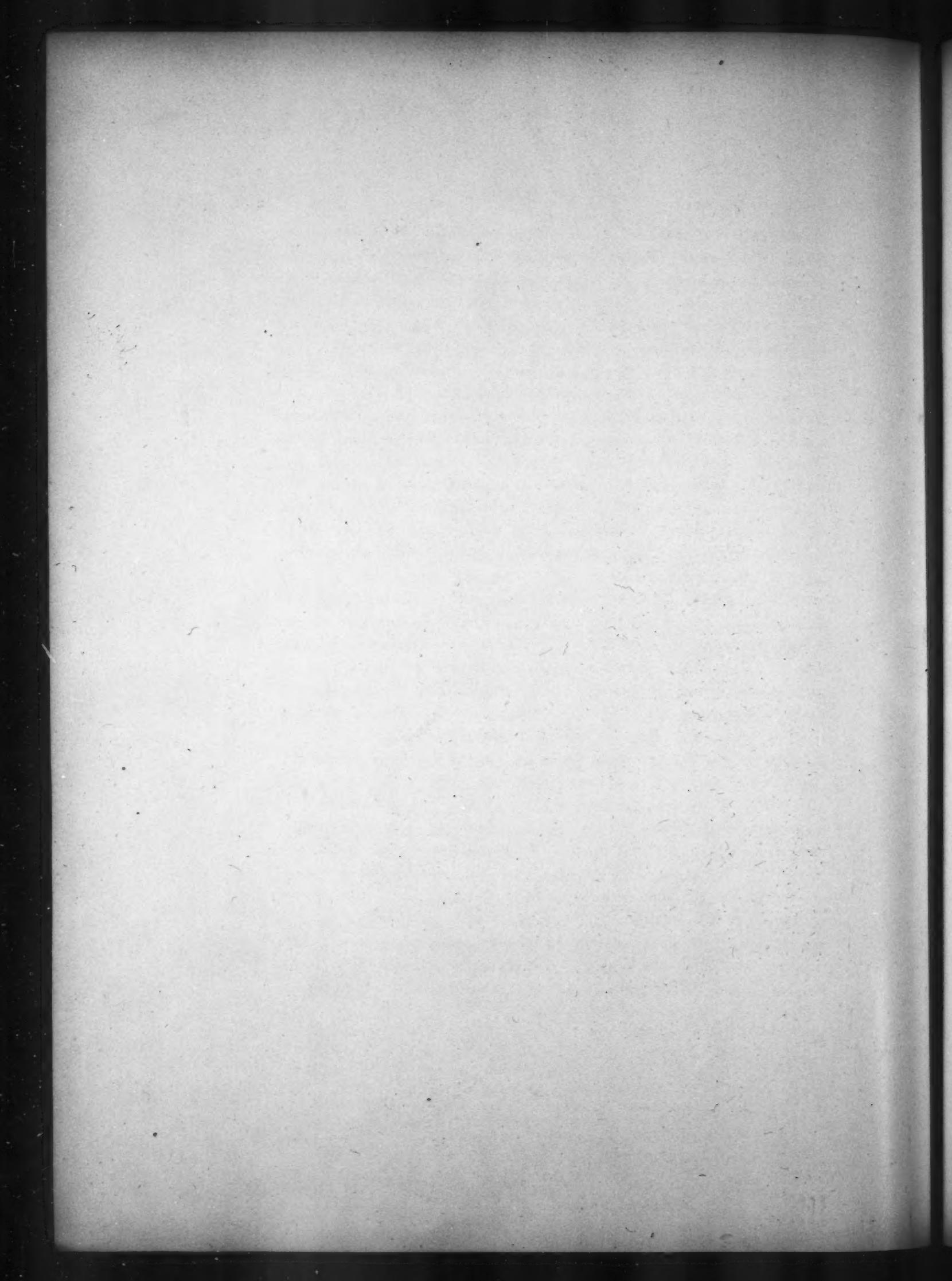
than any other country in the world. In the present state of affairs, the interior is bound to remain inaccessible by reason of the sparseness of the population, the absence of victualling stations, and the frequency of very severe rainfalls. Our birds of Paradise, together with all their companions, are therefore sure of many peaceful days.

The climate of Papua, with its high temperature and its excessive humidity, is extremely unhealthy. But these very characteristics are highly favourable to the development of the vegetation; the beauty of the trees and the amazing wealth and variety of the flora long ago enchanted those navigators who saw them. Dumont d'Urville, who had but a glimpse of New Guinea, was much struck with the wealth of nature in these parts, and he has described, with something of enthusiasm, the appearance of the countries he visited.

The view of Dorei Harbour, the gleaming islands of Mana Souapi, the whole coast sloping off towards the south as far as the limits of the horizon, the imposing chain of the Arfak mountains, present a truly delightful picture. It is pure nature in all her splendour and all her severity. The traveller gazes with astonishment at this vigour of vegetation, at this superabundance of vitality, which is able to cover the most arid and rocky soil with trees, ferns, and parasitic plants. "In no other part of the world," continues the celebrated explorer, "have I seen plants of such stupendous dimensions; the size of the trees in these forests surpasses everything that I have ever seen."

According to M. Laglaize, every part of the shore of New Guinea where there is no white sand is covered with mangrove trees, forming a belt often several miles in thickness. This singular growth of trees seems to consist of two storeys, the upper formed entirely of branches and foliage, the lower of an inextricable confusion of trunks and roots, which it is often impossible to traverse without the help of the axe for cutting a path. On the shore where these trees grow it would be impossible to set foot to the ground without sinking bodily into the mud. The inhabitants, who are obliged to go every day to the sea whence they derive the greater part of their food, contrive to get along the branches with perfect ease. Our sailors, determined not to be outdone by the savages even





in the matter of climbing, have often shown themselves most agile in following the tracks indicated by the Papuans. Elsewhere the forest begins at once, for at high tide the trunks of the outer trees are washed by the waves. There, the trees are of gigantic size, with smooth bark, and branches and foliage which do not appear till the trunks are fifty or sixty feet above the ground. Below is a carpet of verdure mainly composed of ferns. As soon as the hills begin, the individual trees are less lofty, and the tangle of underwood becomes a veritable chaos. On certain parts of the coast there are vast marshes, quite impassable, but astonishingly productive of sago, that unfailing resource of the natives. Areca-trees are more or less abundant. The Papuans use the areca nuts in the preparation of the betel which they chew incessantly, to judge by their black teeth and bleeding lips.

From the stories of travellers, we might almost conclude that New Guinea contains within its borders all the greatest splendours of nature. One last extract from the writings of M. d'Albertis will show what we mean. The Genoese *savant* is approaching the Arfak mountains, and when he reaches a certain height he stops, astounded and enraptured by the scene before him : "Round a glade set with bananas stretches a majestic forest, glorious beyond all description. As the foliage is too dense to allow the sun's rays to penetrate, the extreme humidity of the interior gives amazing vigour to the plants; earth and stones are carpeted with the most lovely ferns and lycopodiums of exquisitely graduated tints. I was in the midst of the most sublime scene that it has ever been my lot to contemplate : before me lay the shore in all its wide beauty, and the ocean was illumined by the glory of the setting sun. The island of Mansinam seemed set in a sea of fire and itself afame with the conflagration of the sky. In the forest, the birds were warbling their good-night to the sun; then the heavens grew pale, the sea became leaden, and the shades of night, which in the tropics follow so rapidly on daylight, silently enveloped the scene."

A country full of hills, high mountains, wide valleys, and plateaux, would seem to offer the most favourable conditions of residence to any number of people. But, hitherto, Europeans have visited only a very limited portion of New Guinea. As the Dutch have a settlement at Ambe-

baki on the north coast, it is chiefly the forests near this station that have been penetrated by a few explorers. These explorers have seen, amid their natural surroundings, many of the birds and insects which were formerly only obtainable through the natives.

Amongst the insects there are quantities of small kinds which do not call for more attention than do those of our temperate climates, but, on the other hand, there are also some species of huge dimensions, superb colour, and magnificent appearance: great green-tinted weevils, with colours fresh and iridescent, their elytra striped with rich black bands; emerald-coloured buprestidans, flaming like fire; lamellicorns of a quite peculiar kind and of a marvellous wealth of colouring; and on the rotten tree-trunks a strange sort of stag-beetle which is found nowhere else except on some of the neighbouring islands.

The bird world is no less fully represented. Papua is often quoted as the portion of the globe richest in different species of birds. *They* do not suffer from the climate! There is a cassowary, very similar to that found in Australia; there are talegallas, representatives of the family to which our cocks and hens belong; and troops of lovely pigeons, amongst them the giants of the family, the gouras, specimens of which are sometimes to be seen in our menageries; there are charming varieties of parrots,—lories, with scarlet plumage sometimes varied by startling blue or green; superb cockatoos, some quite white, others perfectly black, thus forming a curious contrast; others again which perch on the summits of high trees where the birds of Paradise congregate, all filling the air with the most discordant cries and shrieks. In the absence of man, life seems to be overflowing, animation is at its height.

Sportsmen would marvel at the variety of mammals; there is game in abundance. Under the covering of the large woods prowl herds of wild boars—the famous wild boar of Papua, which has now become domesticated in nearly every archipelago of Polynesia. It is pretty to see the bounding troops of kangaroos, and to watch the frolics of the graceful phalangers, so singularly agile in climbing trees. Then there are quantities of those enormous bats known as vampires, which during the day assemble in multitudes on the little islands, and at night return to the

main island to seek the fruits which form their sole food. As they fly through the dusky atmosphere they look like grim phantoms and are enough to terrify the superstitious. The Papuans, however, are not afraid of them; they simply catch and eat them.

If it is only a question of luxuriance of vegetation and abundance of animal life, need one go elsewhere than to New Guinea to live well? Alas, there is the climate to consider, as well as the fact that upon the whole of this great island there are but scanty sprinklings of inhabitants to be found. Explorers estimate the total number of the population at not more than five or six thousand. Some of the tribes are peaceful and inclined to welcome strangers; others are savage and reputed to be cannibals.

The natives are of various races, some with no fixed occupation at all, and others with very primitive notions on the subject. The Papuans most often mentioned by navigators inhabit the various regions on the coast. They have thick curly hair, which they regard as an ornament, and to which they generally pay great attention. According to their individual tastes, they dress it in very different manners. Dampier was the first to call attention to the singular head-dress which produces the effect of a balloon. To see the heads of some of these Papuans one might really believe that they had lived amongst the ancient Romans, for the styles are not at all unlike those we see represented in statues and coins. One comes across curious instances of coquetry all over the world. In New Guinea the natives are of opinion that red hair is more pleasing than black, and so, in order to obtain the desired shade, they spread over their hair a mixture of powdered coral and ashes pounded together with sea-water.

The Papuans have the reputation of possessing an unattractive appearance, and they make their faces still more frightful by the extraordinary ornaments they wear—such as rings hanging from the nose. They are of uncleanly habits, and appear to lead a miserable life; they are extremely jealous of their wives, whom no European could think other than hideous. We need not go to Australasia to study their appearance, for numerous photographs of them have been brought home by travellers.

On many parts of the shore the Papuans build nothing better than

wooden huts, so fragile that they shake with every footstep. In other parts there are villages built on piles, the houses low, with curious roofs shaped like the shell of a turtle. At high tide when the piles disappear under the sea, the village presents the appearance of an assembly of gigantic turtles. The most industrious of the inhabitants of New Guinea manufacture canoes, pottery, and arrows, and even attempt art in the form of a rude kind of sculpture.

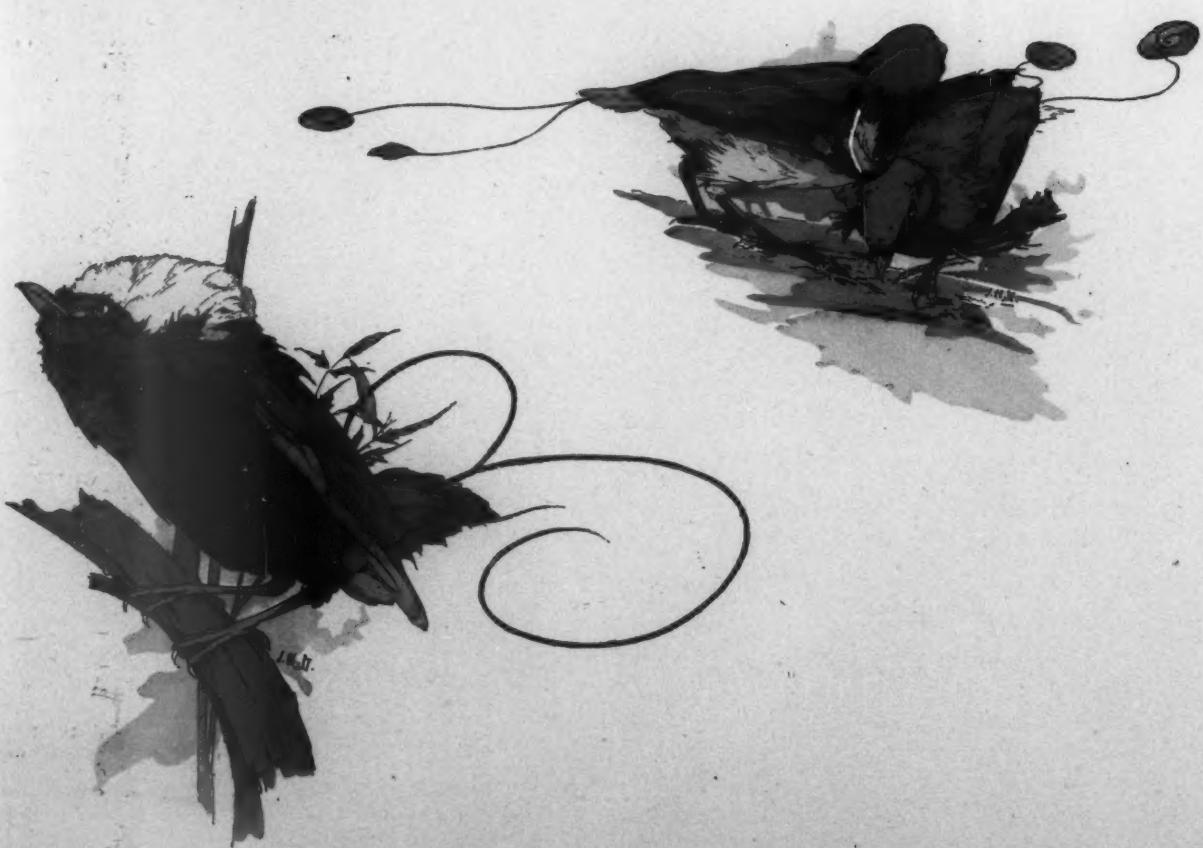
As soon as we reach the mountains, we find the Alfuros, who possess some knowledge of agriculture. In spite of the hostility which exists between the tribes of the coast and those of the interior, there remains just sufficient intercourse between them to allow of a kind of primitive commerce.

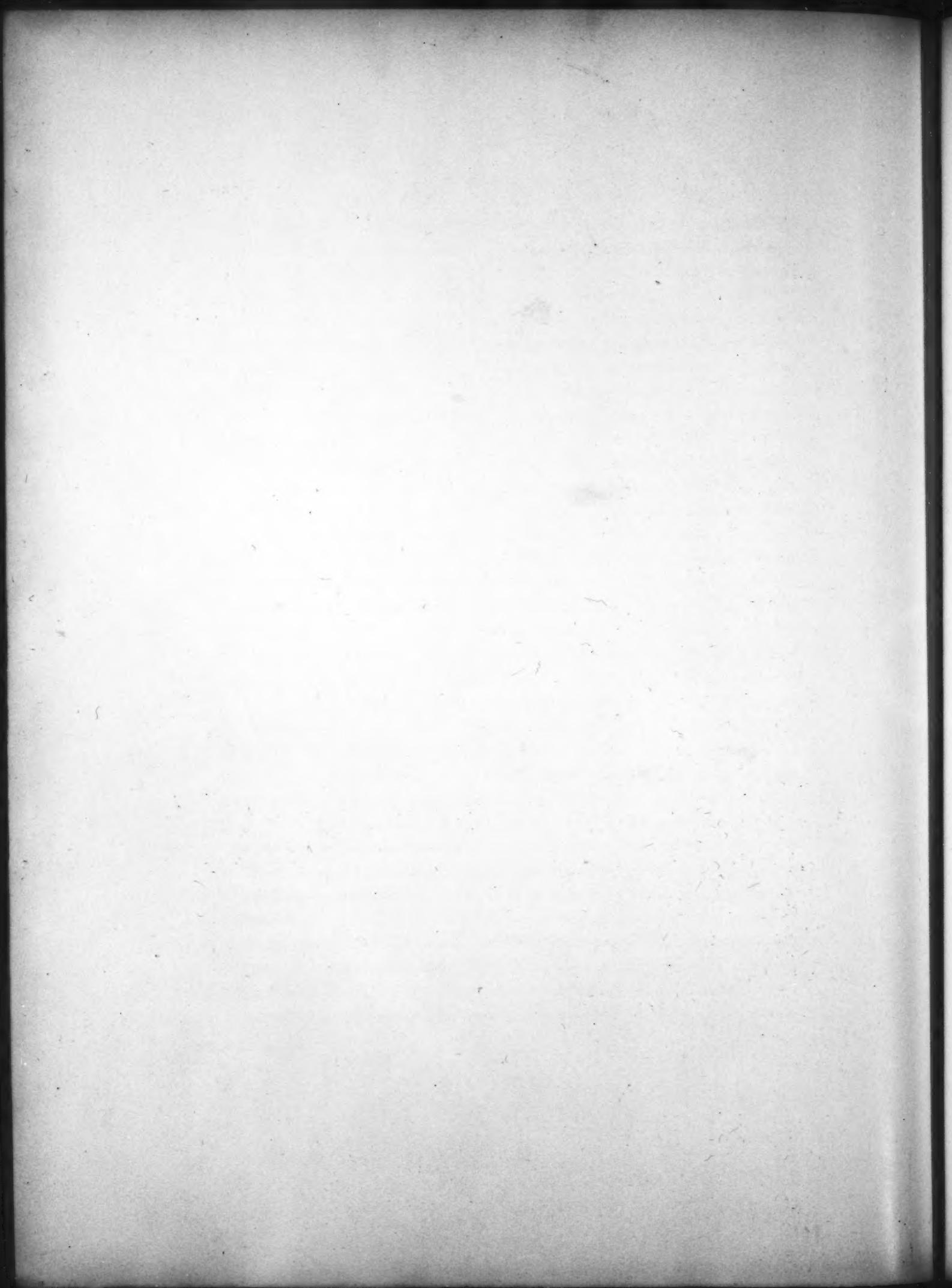
At present the Dutch settlers at Amberbaki consider themselves masters of the whole of the western portion of the island. The Germans contend for the possession of a strip of land to the north-east, while the English claim the south-east; it is said, however, that in the territories of Germany and England very few representatives of these nations are to be found.

This short sketch of New Guinea leaves us now free to pursue the subject of birds of Paradise and to observe these captivating creatures, so justly famed for their beauty and animation, more minutely.

* * *

In the splendour of their plumage, birds of Paradise undoubtedly far surpass any other family of birds. In their general physical conformation, however, there is nothing extraordinary; the structure of the skeleton is by no means unlike that of our starlings. It is only their covering that disguises them. In this instance one would be ill-advised in saying that it is not the cowl that makes the monk! As a matter of fact, the birds form a small branch of the great family of Fringillæ, as defined by us more than thirty years ago. Different authors have tried at various times to include the Epimaque and the Seleucides alba in the same family; but in reality the last-mentioned bird belongs to a special subdivision of the Fringillæ; and to class Epimaques with birds of Paradise was not uniting





relations, but associating rivals,—rivals in every sense, for Epimaques, no less than birds of Paradise, possess a plumage of remarkable richness, splendour, magnificence.

Thus we find that what was once considered a supreme, ideal, and unique beauty is no longer so; and instead of being face to face with an extraordinary and unique genus we now find the genus to be not unrivalled.

Birds of Paradise have a rather thick beak, and their feet are heavy and somewhat clumsy; their plumage has caused them to be ranked as members of the highest aristocracy, but alas, their feet are decidedly plebeian. Such things do occur, however, in other worlds besides the bird-world! In this little Paradise tribe it is only the males who possess the captivating beauties so justly famous; the females are quite ordinary birds, with none of the elegant adornments so much admired in the other sex. What would one not give to be able to penetrate to the inmost recesses of their hearts? Is it not possible, is it not indeed probable, that these superb males consider their modestly-attired mates infinitely more attractive than themselves? It is only right that they should do so. Or are they so vain as to find satisfaction in outshining their humble companions? Certainly this would not be contrary to the practice which prevails in a certain society; but the science of comparative psychology is as yet in its infancy, and it would be rash to apply its laws too rigorously.

It is of little use, however, to possess a fine dress unless one knows how to wear it, unless one is gifted also with a distinguished manner and noble bearing. For a long time nothing was known of the graceful attitudes and movements of these birds; the specimens exhibited in museums naturally gave no idea of their powers of motion, so that when some few live specimens were first brought to Europe, they caused considerable surprise. These were birds which had narrowly escaped death—wounded by the sportsman, captured, and healed. In their full splendour they were first seen in the Zoological Gardens of London, in the Natural History Museum in Paris, and the Jardin d'acclimatation. The graceful movements of the head, the exquisite undulation of the neck, and the proud manner of raising and spreading the tail, could not fail to excite admiration.

The only object of the Papuans in capturing these pretty creatures is

to trade with their plumage; they wait until the most favourable season, and then, in the high branches of the forest trees, build little huts of foliage in which they hide; then they watch the birds and shoot them with arrows. It is well known how unfailing are the resources of primitive man in pursuit of his prey. When the young birds take refuge in areca trees, the Papuans climb up like cats and take them while they are asleep. Certain other species display a great liking for the fruit of the wild fig-tree, and these are caught by means of nets spread over the trees. In such ways the natives display an ingenuity that would not disgrace civilised Europeans.

When young, the males exactly resemble the females, and it is only by slow degrees that they acquire their full splendour. The highest point of perfection is not reached until after three successive moultings, that is to say, towards the beginning of the fourth year.

As we gaze at a beautiful creature, we unconsciously persuade ourselves that its voice must be sweet, melodious, and silvery; but we may easily be disappointed in this respect. If we hope to find, in these sumptuously clothed creatures of Papua, a sort of harmony between the beauty of their plumage and the music of their song, we shall be cruelly deceived. For they are silent during the heat of the day, and when they flit about at morning and evening they utter a harsh, piercing cry which re-echoes to an enormous distance; this is the music of the forest, and such is the intensity of the sound that it reaches the ears of sailors passing near the shore. What a famous symphony it must be, performed by parrots of all sorts, lories with strident voice, cockatoos with hoarse, guttural cry, and, above them all, the birds of Paradise, whose note is certainly anything but seraphic!

By this time several different varieties of birds of Paradise are recognised, and specialists have classified them into divers species, though with no more distinctive differences than certain peculiarities of plumage. If some species are distributed generally throughout the country, others again seem to be confined to more or less limited areas. We are inclined to believe that if we could penetrate to the interior of New Guinea we should discover more than one as yet unknown variety.

Shall we endeavour to describe the largest of the different species, that known to naturalists as the *Paradisea Apoda*, according to the name given by Linnaeus? In very truth, it baffles description. The diversity of the shades, the gradations by which they melt into each other, the flashing scintillations caused by light and shade, the singularity of the most graceful adornments, all render pen and voice alike powerless to describe them. Is there any hope of succeeding in a faithful representation on canvas? Alas, the most consummate art could never, in this instance, completely attain its ideal. Even a magic brush could not reproduce the iridescent hues and scintillating lights with which nature has gifted these lovely creatures.

In the species known as Superb, the wings, tail, and back are of a rich brown, which, on the breast, passes insensibly to deep purple or violet-black. The neck and head, covered with a sort of velvety pile formed of close upright feathers, are pale yellow of incomparable delicacy. The feathers on the throat present the appearance of very delicate emerald green scales; and, as if this were not splendour enough, the forehead is crossed by a band of dark green glistening with metallic lustre. It is not only the magnificent colours that fascinate the observer; there are other specialities quite unique—such as the two long feathers in the middle of the tail, rising in spiral form, and curving gracefully outwards, or the tufts of long delicate feathers, golden as the apples of the Hesperides, springing from beneath the wings on either side.

Naturalists have by this time been able to make a good many observations on the character, the tastes, and the habits of these famous birds,—observations which carry us into the actual scenes of their life, some poetic and others prosaic. But there is still much to learn.

The Great Birds of Paradise are extremely active and seem to be in perpetual motion. They generally fly together in small companies. They enjoy struggling against the wind, but are most careful never to fly with it, for their light feathers would be tossed about and blown forwards, and there would be a general ruffling and uncomfortable disorder. Very often in the morning they assemble in great numbers near the tops of the large trees; some flit from branch to branch; others, remaining on

one spot, throw themselves into the most varied attitudes; some crouch down, showing off their tails, wings open, head lowered, the great side feathers upright and outspread like two magnificent bright yellow fans shot with deep red, forming a sort of golden aureole round the body. In such an attitude the bird of Paradise seems verily the most enchanting, the most marvellous of living creatures.

In the matter of food they are omnivorous. They are particularly fond of fruit, especially small figs, but they are equally glad to eat insects, such as caterpillars, grasshoppers, crickets, and butterflies. They will even attack very small mammals, eating the flesh and leaving the bones.

Up to the present we have no very exact information as to the pairing, building of nests, and breeding. When questioned on this subject, the Papuans answered Mr. Russel Wallace that the birds built their nests on the end of a branch or sometimes on an ant-hill; but it does not do to trust too implicitly to such statements. These islanders, simple enough folk according to common report, are by no means above amusing themselves with the somewhat naïve credulity of Europeans. In spite of the most seductive offers, the English explorer did not succeed in obtaining one of the nests. According to the most recent information from later travellers it is believed that the Great Bird of Paradise builds in holes near the tops of the highest trees; likewise the smaller bird (*Paradisea Papuana*), the species distributed throughout Papua and a number of the adjacent islands. Though this smaller variety is inferior in size to the larger, it resembles it a good deal in general appearance, but the colours are paler, and the spiral feathers of the tail shorter.

West of New Guinea, and especially in the island of Waigiou lives the red species (*Paradisea rubra*). Of the same size as the smaller bird, its side tufts are deep crimson, tipped with white; from the tail are suspended, in graceful double curve, two long feathers like shining black ribbons. It is an extremely pretty bird, and no one watching its lithe movements could fail to admire it.

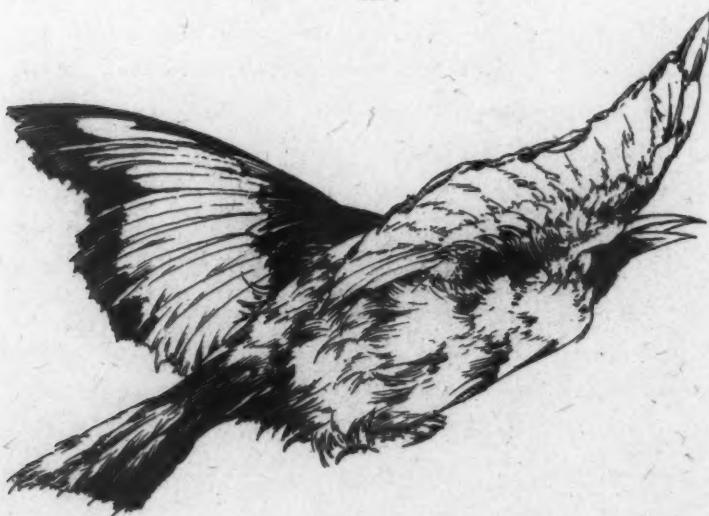
In certain districts of Papua, as well as in the Aru Islands, is to be found the most magnificent variety of all, the Manucode, often called the Paradise King—(*Paradisea regia*); it has neck, head, and back of the most

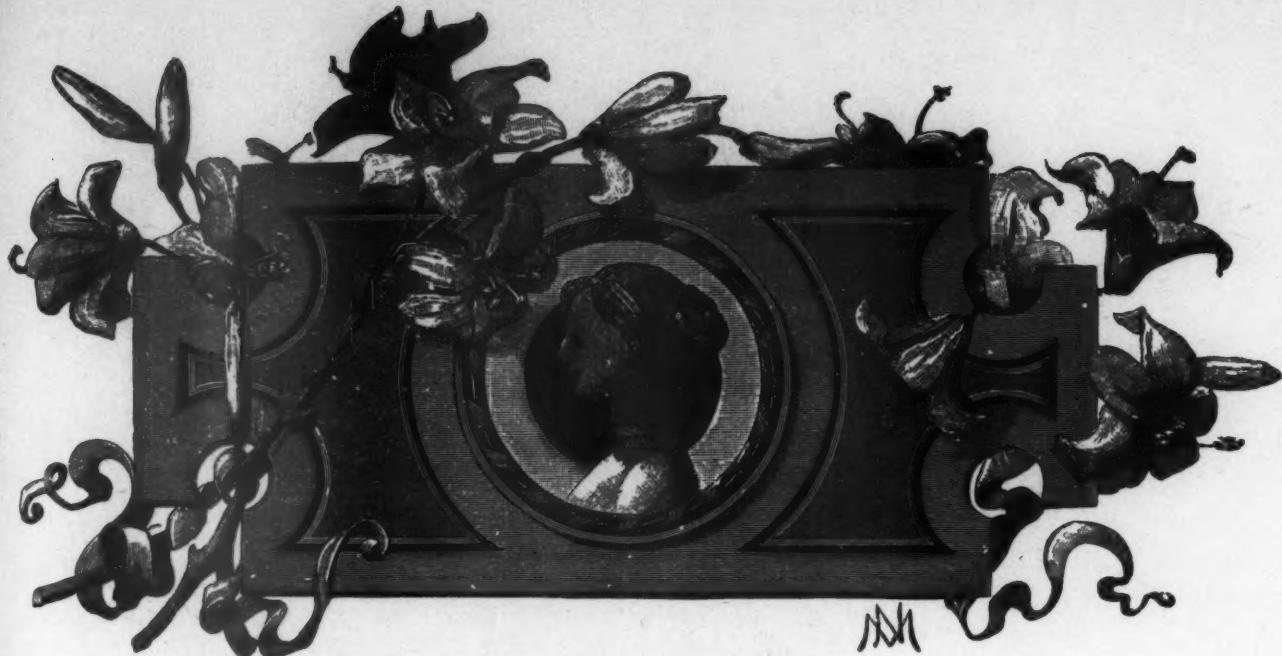
brilliant crimson, and the lower parts of silky white, forming an admirable contrast to the other dazzling colours; the spirals of the tail are furnished at the extremities, with curling feathers. One of the most vaunted varieties is the Lophorhine (*Lophorhina atra*), entirely clothed in black velvety feathers with a purple gloss, and a shining breastplate of brilliant blues and greens, but its most peculiar adornment is a sort of cape, of the same shape as the breastplate, but much larger and of glossy purple-black. This species is found in the great forests to the north of New Guinea. There are many other kinds, of small size, classified by naturalists into several species. We will only mention the six-shafted bird of Paradise, which has on each side of its head three long slender filaments terminated by a spatulate expansion. It is described as rocking on a branch in some lovely glade, swinging the six long pennons of the head, lifting and drooping the little aigrette of white feathers on its crest, and shining in the sun like burnished silver. M. d'Albertis represents the bird as incessantly moving the scaly feathers of the neck and causing them to glitter like metal spangles.

Indeed it is impossible to enumerate all the many exquisite beauties of these highly favoured beings; but when splendour is so profuse as to become overpowering we would fain turn aside from it; our eyes are wearied by garments of gold and purple, and we are glad to rest them on simple clothing and soft colours. The majority of our European birds, in spite of their modest appearance, are attractive by reason of their sweet and gentle nature. With birds of Paradise, as soon as one has described their exquisite beauty, there is no more to say. Up to the present, little or nothing has been told us of their habits, their loves, and their aptitudes. We know nothing either of their mind, of their conduct in the varying circumstances of their lives, of the relations between pairs or of their parental affections. We are assured that as a race they are very sociable. As far as certain Australian types have been studied, they appear to hold public gatherings on branches specially decked beforehand with foliage; then certain members of skill and experience deliberately go through a series of gambols and dances, evidently with the intention of giving pleasure to the spectators. In these performances the male birds take the larger share, exercising a sort of fascination over the females.

But although there is not as yet a complete history of birds of Paradise, their mere existence is of supreme interest. Indeed, the more one studies the distribution of creatures on the surface of the globe, the more one marvels at the fact that an infinity of the most strongly characteristic forms are peculiar to certain strictly limited regions. Humming-birds are only found in the hottest parts of America, whereas their rivals in brilliance of plumage, the Souimangas, are found in Africa and the southern parts of Asia. New Guinea and the islands more or less adjacent are the home of birds of Paradise. Thus these pretty feathered creatures indicate the different quarters of the globe better than any other name. For the traveller sailing eastwards, after having passed the Moluccas, and seeing before him the Aru Islands and Papua, could not describe his position more correctly and concisely than by saying : "We are in the land of the birds of Paradise."

ÉMILE BLANCHARD.





LILIA

Great was the amazement in Venice when a rumour went abroad that Maestro Leonicene was resigning his professorship of Latin literature. He, whose sole passion was classic learning, whose precocious fame was derived from its study! Was it the cloister which was tempting him?

The learned Hermolao Barbaro besought him on behalf of his pupils; the Doge Malipieri appealed to him in the name of the Illustrious Republic. "What," they said, "will you forsake the school you have founded just when the youth of all lands are gathering about it like bees to a hive?"

Politian wrote to him from Florence a distich of which the purport was : "Pause not on thy way, thou who art guiding Italy to him who was the guide of Dante."

Lorenzo the Magnificent added his entreaties to those of Politian. But to every visitor and every messenger Leonicene made reply :

"I long believed that happiness is to be found in study, that the society of Tullius and Virgil ought amply to satisfy man, as communion

with God satisfies the monk; but God has granted that Messire Nicolas Janson should come to Venice from France, and bring us the inestimable invention of printing. I went to see him carving out his type and working his presses, and to offer him my manuscript copy of Quintilian's *De institutione oratoria*. And while we were in discourse, his daughter Nicole came in, as fair as Dido, as sparkling as Lydia, and the instant I saw her, before she had spoken a word, I understood that happiness lies in loving. Nicole has granted me her favour. Come to my marriage, masters, look on my wife, and say then if I am in the wrong to dedicate my life to her without reserve."

Those who simply took this answer, shook their heads, and cursed Love, who can beguile the most learned to be faithless to the worship of the divine Muses. Those who came to Leonicene's marriage could but envy him.

"Never," said the senators and goldsmiths; "never," said the scriveners and gondoliers; "never had so bewitching a bride been seen on the Piazzetta; never had the daughter even of a Provveditore shown eyes more brightly blue, or hair of filmier gold under her transparent veil."

And the bells and the pigeons of Saint Mark's echoed "Never."

Oh! that communion of two virgin souls under an enchanted sky! Oh! the glorious certainty of possession after the agitation of first meetings, the anguish of avowals; and their love, infinitely multiplied by the desire to charm, and the pleasure of pleasing!

He was all passion, she was all tenderness; if he thought her fair, she no less thought him handsome; after an hour's separation he thrilled when he looked into her smiling eyes, as she did at hearing the caressing tone of his voice, the tone which was for her alone.

All the day long they would stay at home, sitting close to each other, he annotating transcripts on parchment, she spinning silk or embroidering a cap with pearls, while now and again they paused in their task to ask some arch question, to make a gleeful answer, or to return thanks to God, the giver of all these joys. Then, when the evening meal was over and the shadows were stealing a march on the rosy pinnacles of the palaces, Nicole and Leonicene would go forth to bid the sun farewell;

the darkening waves rocked their boat, and sitting with clasped hands, they gazed in silence while the City of Silence sank into the sea, and the stars came out, a shining cypher on the book of night.

And their little daughter Nicolette was growing up, the smaller image of her mother, as though to keep record of the years of their love.

One night Nicole stopped the gondolier as he was making for the open sea.

"Let us go home," she said, and her voice was changed.

Chilled by the treacherous wind over the lagoon, as she went in at the gate her teeth were chattering. Next morning she was delirious, haunted by all the monsters of a fevered dream; then she recovered herself, languid and breathless.

And suddenly the idea of Death came upon her.

"If this were the end? If I had had all my share of happiness?"

Overwhelmed by this horror, utterly distracted, she began to scream: "No, no! I will not die, I will not!"

But the struggle was a vain one; she felt her life ebbing from hour to hour; darkness was closing in upon her; the dread Inevitable was at hand. Then she repented of her rebellion, and tried to propitiate God. In a desperate glow of fervency, crying aloud in heartrending words, she besought Him to allow her to live, only a few years. The pangs of death told her that He heard her not. Once more she cast a fond lingering look at him whom she would still have loved so truly, him whom she was quitting for ever; she sighed a deep, quivering sigh; the smiling blue eyes were full of tears, and her spirit was reft from the lovely form.

When Leonicene found himself alone, and clad in black in his desolate home, when he stood face to face with the little girl, a cry broke from him; he had heard Nicolette weeping these two days past, and murmuring fond words in his ear, but he had only gazed into dark vacancy, and had not heeded her. The resemblance which had enchanted them of old, now struck him afresh.

"Nicolette!" But he could not bear to speak this name, a pet name for that other name which they had chosen without hesitation, and had never uttered without a smile.

At first he was startled as he looked at the child, so like her mother in miniature that she might have been the dead Nicole beginning life again; and he gazed at her for some time as if anxious to inure himself at once to this new pang. Then, as he watched her, the pain was mingled with anxiety; he pictured Nicolette living indeed the same life as her mother, knowing the same ephemeral bliss at the price of the same agony and despair. With a shudder of pity he cried :

"No, sweet child! You shall never know that anguish. No! you shall not inflict it on another! I will save you from suffering, by saving you from love!"

He had been brought up near Vicenza, and he still remembered a farm perched on the slope of a hill, and half-ruined by Sforza's followers, which Horace would nevertheless have loved as much as his villa at Tibur, so perfect was the peace that reigned under the trees where birds built and piped, and by the brooks, which leaped in little waterfalls. Thither Leonicene took his daughter. The yellow-stemmed pines cast a light shadow on the house, which was freshly whitened, on the flat roof in its scale armour of new tiles; the grass in the orchard was hidden under flowers; a hedge of iris guarded every spring, and every lattice was framed in roses. Lilies reared their waving sceptres of silver.

Nicolette stopped almost at the entrance : "Why did my poor mamma stay behind in her marble prison?"

"Do you think she would have slept better under the cypresses and myrtles?"

"Yes, I think so; but as that cannot be——"

"Look!"

The child looked up, and her father pointed to a spot where she perceived, under the cypress and myrtle trees, a short broad mound covered with fresh-cut turf, and she understood that the dead had come with them.

"Oh!" she cried, with a heavenly smile, "how happy we shall be here, all three together!"

Leonicene clasped her to his heart, and looking straight into her eyes he repeated : "All three always? Never any one but us three?"

She slowly nodded, and said "Yes," but her manner said : "I know what you are asking of me." And solemnly, as if calling her father and the grave to witness, she said firmly : "I will never be anything but your little girl, I swear it."

Years slipped by, and yet again years. Leonicene, fearing lest he must weep if he called her Nicolette, had named her Lilia, because of all flowers he loved lilies best, and because her figure was as slender as their stem, and her soul as pure as their ivory cup.

All the day, till it was dark, Leonicene went about the garden-plot, watching the bees at work, and the plants grow, or pausing to teach her the twin arts of drawing and music; seated in front of him, Lilia would listen to her father, her chin resting on her hand, as he gently initiated her into the harmony of things. When supper was ended, and the hour drew near when lovers whisper to each other, the old man would shut himself into his room, and seek aid from the great ancients to enable him to resist the assaults of memory, and Lilia meanwhile, lingering in the grove, or by the bank of a stream, slowly wandered into the darkness.

And then she reached the age of her mother, when Leonicene had first gone to the house of Messire Nicolas Janson.

One night her father woke from a terrible dream. He fancied he had heard Lilia calling for help as she was carried off in one of those black gondolas, so like a coffin!

He flew trembling to her room. It was deserted. Then he shouted with all his might : "Lilia! My child!"

Lilia answered not.

"She is dead!" he thought.

He went out to the orchard, straight to Nicole's grave, searched through every path a score of times, still calling : "Lilia!"

Lilia was not by the grave. She was nowhere in the orchard.

At last, as dawn was breaking, a citizen, a grey-bearded, kind old man, knocked at the garden gate.

"Messer Leonicene," said he, "you are seeking your daughter? She is at my house. My son, passing this way one evening, saw her,

and fell in love with her. She gave her consent. Then she remembered the oath she had sworn to you, that she would live a maid, and thinking in her innocence that she was very wicked, she took fright, and came to tell me and my wife all her trouble. Let the children marry, Messere; they are worthy of each other. My son is the best lute player in Vicenza, at the sign of Madonna Santa Cecilia; the best, aye, and the richest. So take your staff, and let me show you the way thither; for your daughter will never dare see you again, unless you come to fetch her."

Leonicene was trembling in every limb. He stood gazing as if lost, at the man whose easy speech had given him such tidings.

"Did you say," he asked at last, "that she is waiting till I fetch her?"

"Yes, Messere."

"Well then, hear me : Never!"

"What? Your daughter?"

"I have no daughter. She of whom you speak is nothing to me." And slamming the gate he cried : "Her fate be on her own head."

The sun is sinking. The murmur of the plain is dying away. Leonicene is prowling among the flowers, a wrathful figure, and still a tide of bitter words surges from his heart and overflows his lips.

"That sweet face! That lily whiteness! That embodied fragrance! And I rejoiced to see her smile! Those smiles were for another. And it was bliss to me to hear her pure voice ring through the night! A signal for another!—And for whom, I ask you? For a chance passer-by, seen one evening over the hedge. 'Come.'—'I am coming.' And the vow she swore by the grave? 'What then? And what matter? Are we to stop for that?' And her father, who will think she is dead, and who will die of it? 'Pooh, does an old man die of such a trifle?'—Oh, wretched girl, so often warned, and yet you know what sorrows you rush into, what is the cost of loving. Go, then, since I have failed to guard you. Go, and seek them; faithlessness, perhaps, and despair for certain. Go, drink your fill of tears, since you thirst for them. Go, and live as your father has lived, go, and die as your mother died.—Great God! was not that her voice?"

He listens. The shadows are gathering, and there is no voice but the whisper of the wind rocking the tall poplars.

"No, it is not she. Why indeed should she come? Has she not her new family about her, all eager to flatter her, blind and deaf to their stolen kisses?—Who is there? Who dares answer me when I say so?"

But there is no one. Not a sound but the murmur of the brooks reflecting the dim blue sky. It is night, and for the first time in so many years Leonicene does not shun it, or shut himself up with his books. The night sheds its ashen grey gloom; he waits till the garden is quite dim, and then at last he asks of the darkness: "But how did she dare to do it? What put it into her head?"

A star has just come out behind the quivering trees, the darkness thrills, night seems to vibrate as the palpitating breath of earth hovers over the standing corn, as more subtle aromas are shed by the drowsy plants, the pulsations of the fragrant vapour gain greater stress, till the fragrance seems to find a voice, a rhythmic murmur like breathing, as tremulous as beating wings, hollow-toned like the ebb and flow of waves. In this concert of odours, each growing thing has a note of its own. And presently a melody rises from amid this inarticulate chorus, a song, formless at first, but growing bolder and more eager to burst forth at last in a passionate strain, till the flowers, in a language unutterable by the human tongue, with such caressing language as no strings could express, sing through every opening bud, every balmy lip, the joys of love.

"You beguiling fools. You have been her ruin! The heady nectar that she has drunk was poured for her by you, base lilies, shameless roses, cups drenched in poison!" And the old man, shaken with fury, looks about him for a weapon, to cut down the accursed flowers, the flowers which still are singing.

Stay, old man, they sing no longer!

Is this a dream?

The flowers are silent; but now the streams lift up their voice, their reeds and flags, their pebbles and waterfalls; the trees too are singing, their heart-shaped leaves, their boughs waving like arms; and the breeze carries away their song and bears it to the blue; and the blossoms in

the orchard are answered by the flowers in the sky : "Wedded love! Wedded love."

The old man totters like a man who has too rashly leaned over the fermenting wine-vat. Abandoned, all unarmed, to the storm of his memories, he fancies now that he heard an echo of long-forgotten harmonies in the pean chanted by earth and sky, to a rhythm of kisses. And lo, another voice, slow and mournful as the chant of a gondolier, a voice from beneath the sod where the plants have their roots! And this voice too sings in praise of love—love as inevitable as light or thunder, love whose joys transcend all pain.

One by one the stars die out. The garden door is open now; Leonicene is hurrying down the road which leads to the town and the dawn looks on with a rosy smile, and although the tears are still on his cheeks, behold, he too is smiling as he says to himself :

"At the sign of Santa Cecilia."

ÉMILE MOREAU.





THE ITALIAN ARMY IN 1889

ORIGIN

To speak of Italy was, until recent years, to suggest the idea of art, of poetry, and of the picturesque, to conjure up a vision of blue skies, of rare and beautiful monuments, and of classic landscapes. But in our day the "bel paese" has been invaded by military realism, and after glancing through the periodical publications written in the language of Dante, it may be asserted that it is more often a question of armaments, fortifications, and the calling out of soldiers, than of literature and the fine arts.

The contagion of militarism has spread from the banks of the Spree to the shores of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. Constant preparation for war and the perfecting of engines of destruction have become the latest expression of European civilisation, and Italy, like the neighbouring nations, and even more than they, by reason of her passionate temperament, has thrown herself into the current of ideas which places in the first rank of the interests of a people the organization of its offensive and defensive forces.

The kingdom has actually at its disposition a regular army, which, by the calling out of the reserves, can be made to number more than 880,000 men, while its population, impoverished by constant emigration, does not exceed 29,000,000 inhabitants. That is an extraordinary effort, and, indeed, a monarchy which possesses in contemporary history an existence of only thirty years, would appear to have accomplished a prodigious feat in raising forces so considerable in so short a space of time. But it must be pointed out that the creation of an Italian military power does not amount to a metamorphosis among our neighbours in the South.

The Italian army does not date from 1860; twice already, in the first part of the present century, an Italian army has entered the lists and won laurels of which the present generation has a right to be proud. The parcelling out of the Peninsula solely has interrupted the development of the military spirit, and on two occasions broken the tradition which the Piedmontese troops alone had the honour of preserving until the day when the ability of Cavour, the audacity of Garibaldi, the energy of Victor Emmanuel, and the alliance of France definitely established the kingdom of Italy.

* * *

At the time when the French Revolution was about to convulse Europe and to modify, in a very great degree, the constitution and the frontiers of all the States, the military forces, composed for the most part of Italian elements, were distributed among two kingdoms and a considerable number of little principalities.

The kingdom of Naples had an army of 35,000 men, equipped at great expense, but of doubtful reliability. Piedmont, whose sovereign at that time asserted that "he had more respect for a drum than for all the members of the Academy," in like manner kept up a standing army of 35,000 men; but they were good troops, and, in 1786, but lately organized.

Tuscany with 4000 soldiers, Genoa and Modena with 1500, Parma with 2000, and the Papal States with 3000, mostly Swiss, could not be regarded

as possessing armies. Venice had only on her continental territory an imperfectly disciplined rural militia and twenty-five companies analogous to the "Lancers" of the French period of the fifteenth century. Finally, Lombardy kept in her pay 8000 mercenaries, "recruited," says Cantù, "in the prisons and from among rogues and vagabonds."

Lombardy was the first to have the honour of furnishing the contingents which were to serve as the nucleus of the Italian army in the great wars of the Republic, the Consulate, and the Empire.

In October 1796 two legions, one Lombardic and the other Cispadane, were created in Milan. They severally consisted of seven cohorts of six companies each, comprising a company of grenadiers, a squadron of cavalry, a battery, and a detachment of sappers. They represented, in all, a force of 7000 infantry and 300 cavalry with 8 guns. After the treaty of Campo-Formio, these legions, augmented by contingents from Bergamo, Brescia, and Venice (1), were organized in one army, called the army of the Cisalpine Republic, which possessed a total force of 15,000 men. This was an autonomous army, commanded by an Italian general, and the French officers retained for purposes of instruction had an authority completely distinct from that of the commanders nominated by the Cisalpine Directory.

The Cisalpine army comprised at that time eight legions of infantry of two battalions each, a battalion of light infantry, a regiment of hussars, a corps of twelve companies of artillery with four batteries of four guns, and in addition, a battalion of sappers, miners, and pontonniers.

It received its baptism of fire in the expedition of the Romagnas, and notably in the siege of Faenza, where the Lombardic legion, in the streets of a town invaded on either side, met the French column of assault amid shouts of "Vivent les Français! Vivent les Lombards!"

In 1798 the Piedmontese entered the ranks of Joubert's army and were formed in half-brigades, but the Egyptian expedition very soon deprived the newly-formed army of the distinguished command of Bonaparte. The invasion

(1) After the entry of the French troops into Venice (May 16th, 1797) the Venetian cantons (Venice, Treviso, Padua, Vicenza and Verona) had raised a militia which, on the annexation of Venetia to Austria (October 17th), crossed the Mincio to join the contingents of the Cisalpine Republic.

of Suvarrow annihilated for a moment all traces of independence, and Upper Italy became the prey of the Austro-Russians. Blockaded at Ancona and at Rome, the Franco-Cisalpine garrisons obtained the honours of the war, and were able to reach Genoa, where they sustained, under the orders of Massena, a siege which has become almost legendary. After the return of Bonaparte from Egypt, the Cisalpine refugees were reassembled at Dijon, where they formed the Italian legion, and in 1800 the army was reconstituted by the hero of Marengo on the same footing as that on which he had left it in 1798.

In the following year the Italian division, commanded by Lechi, marched across the gorges and glaciers of the Val Camonica, and repulsed the Austrians under Trent and Bassano, earning by that brilliant operation a most flattering order of the day from Berthier.

After the Treaty of Lunéville the organization of the Cisalpine Republic, henceforth recognized by Europe, was completed by the Council of Lyons, which made Bonaparte the President of the new State. The army was increased to 24,000 men and 4,000 horses. A reserve of 60,000 conscripts of from twenty to twenty-five years of age was to be formed in a period of five years.

The Italian army thus formed three divisions, of which two were under arms. One under the command of Lechi, mustering 4,300 men, 800 horses and 6 guns, was sent into Puglia, the other, under the command of Pino, was ordered to proceed to the camp at Boulogne. The latter took part in the solemn parade in which Napoleon distributed to his soldiers the first crosses of the Legion of Honour, and contributed a short time afterwards to repulse, below Gravelines, the attempt of an English squadron to disembark.

At the same time the battalion of the Guard had been summoned to Paris to serve alternately with the Consular Guard in the *Service d'honneur*.

Bound together as they were by the community of their interests, the recollection of their victories, and the identity of their leader, France and Italy were compelled to submit to a similar destiny. Napoleon being proclaimed Emperor of the French, the Cisalpine Republic could not help

altering its position. It became the Kingdom of Italy, and Napoleon was the king. This change of name is significant. It determines what were the intentions of the Emperor, who, indeed, has also taken care to declare them in his Memoirs.

"From the time of my first appearance in those countries," he wrote, "I always had the idea of creating a free and independent Italian nation. The reunion with the Empire of the different parts of the Peninsula was only temporary; it had only for its end the breaking down of the barriers which separated the peoples and the acceleration of their education, in order to bring about this fusion at a later period; I should have given independence and unity to the whole of Italy."

The first care of Napoleon, after his coronation at Milan, was the re-organization of the Guard. Composed exclusively of picked soldiers who had served for five years, the Italian Guard was raised to an available force of 3,106 men and 775 horses.

At the same time was instituted the corps of the Guard of Honour with four companies of 100 men, of whom 60 were cavalry, and the regiment of the royal light infantry in twelve companies. These two corps, recruited exclusively from among the youth of the Italian aristocracy, were intended as a training-school for commissioned and non-commissioned officers. At the end of two years the soldiers of the Guard of Honour were appointed as sub-lieutenants, and those of the light infantry regiment as sergeants, in the army.

At the same time as the Guards, the army was re-organized; the seven half-brigades of infantry took the name of regiments, and each battalion of the line had to comprise a company of light infantry with an effective force of 122 men, chosen from among conscripts of short stature, and destined in the outposts or on the march to play the part of the "forlorn hope," or to ride behind the cavalry in order to cover long distances with greater expedition.

The two regiments of hussars were respectively transformed into regiments of Napoleon dragoons and the Queen's dragoons, and the first regiment of light cavalry took the name of "Real Italiano."

After having laid the foundations of the military organization and of the administrative services, Napoleon appointed Prince Eugène as Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief.

Thenceforward the Italian army shared the triumphs and the reverses of that of France, and the bulletins of Napoleon, during those ten years of incessant war from the Tagus to Moscow, always mention it with praise.

In 1805 it was the Royal Guard, which, after the capitulation of Mack, the taking of Ulm, and the triumph of Austerlitz, figured in the 37th bulletin of the army in these terms : "The Italian gunners covered themselves with glory at the battle of Austerlitz ; they have merited the esteem of all the old French gunners. As to the Royal Guard, it has marched everywhere with the Imperial Guard, and has constantly shewn itself worthy of such noble company."

The conduct of the division of the Interior, attached to the army of Massena, at the battle of Caldiero or in the defence of the new kingdom of Naples against the attacks of the Anglo-Russians, gave rise to similar reports.

Later on it is the division of the camp of Boulogne, which, at the request of its new chief, Teulié, is directed to proceed on Berlin.

"The Italians," wrote Berthier, "had hardly arrived when they distinguished themselves. On the 19th Teulié with three regiments attacked the enemy near Colberg and captured six guns and three hundred men. On the 20th or 22nd they will be at Colberg." Three days afterwards he wrote again : "Teulié and his Italians are proceeding with redoubled energy ; they have completely beaten the Prussian garrison of Colberg and have shut it up in the place from which they are pushing on the investment."

A personal letter from Napoleon, dated April 19th, confirms to the brave Italian General the marks of esteem of which the Major-General had already been the interpreter.

Teulié, however, could not enjoy the fulness of his growing glory any more than could Turenne. At the moment when he was personally superintending the approach-works, and when his besieging batteries opened

the breach in the central fortification, one of his legs was shot away by a cannon ball; he retained the command during three days of agony, dictating all his orders until the moment of his death.

Napoleon did honour to the victory of this brave man, and his name is engraved on the Arc de Triomphe at Paris.

Around Colberg the hostilities were continued with unflagging pertinacity; the fort of Wolkesberg, carried by assault, and then retaken in consequence of the treachery of a deserter, was reconquered by the 4th Italian regiment after a most sanguinary battle, whilst the troops of General Pino put an end to the campaign against the Swedes by taking Danholm and Rügen.

When this gallant division returned to Milan, Napoleon said to General Caffarelli, then Minister of War : "In the course of this last campaign I have experienced peculiar gratification in observing the conduct of my Italian troops. For the first time for many centuries the Italians have played an honourable part in the theatre of the world. I hope that such brilliant beginnings will stimulate the national ambition."

The campaign of 1807 marks the most brilliant and glorious phase in the history of the Italian army : from the shores of the British Channel to those of the Baltic, from the Danube to Dalmatia, and then to Calabria, the troops of the kingdom of Italy, side by side with those of France, successively coped with the European coalition.

Another and a still more formidable theatre of operations was very soon about to open for them. The Spanish war began; Napoleon commanded the formation, under the orders of General Lechi, of a division for service in the Eastern Pyrenees, comprising 3,000 men, 1,000 horses, and 8 guns, together with a Neapolitan corps. In conjunction with the French troops of Duhesme, Lechi's division entered Catalonia, occupied Barcelona, took possession of Mataro, carried the positions of Molinos del Rey and of Colella, and by vigorous offensive tactics repulsed the Spanish detachments which menaced the retreat of the French troops after their reverse before Gerona. After these first deeds of arms, crosses were sent to the commanders of the several detachments. "I do not know," said

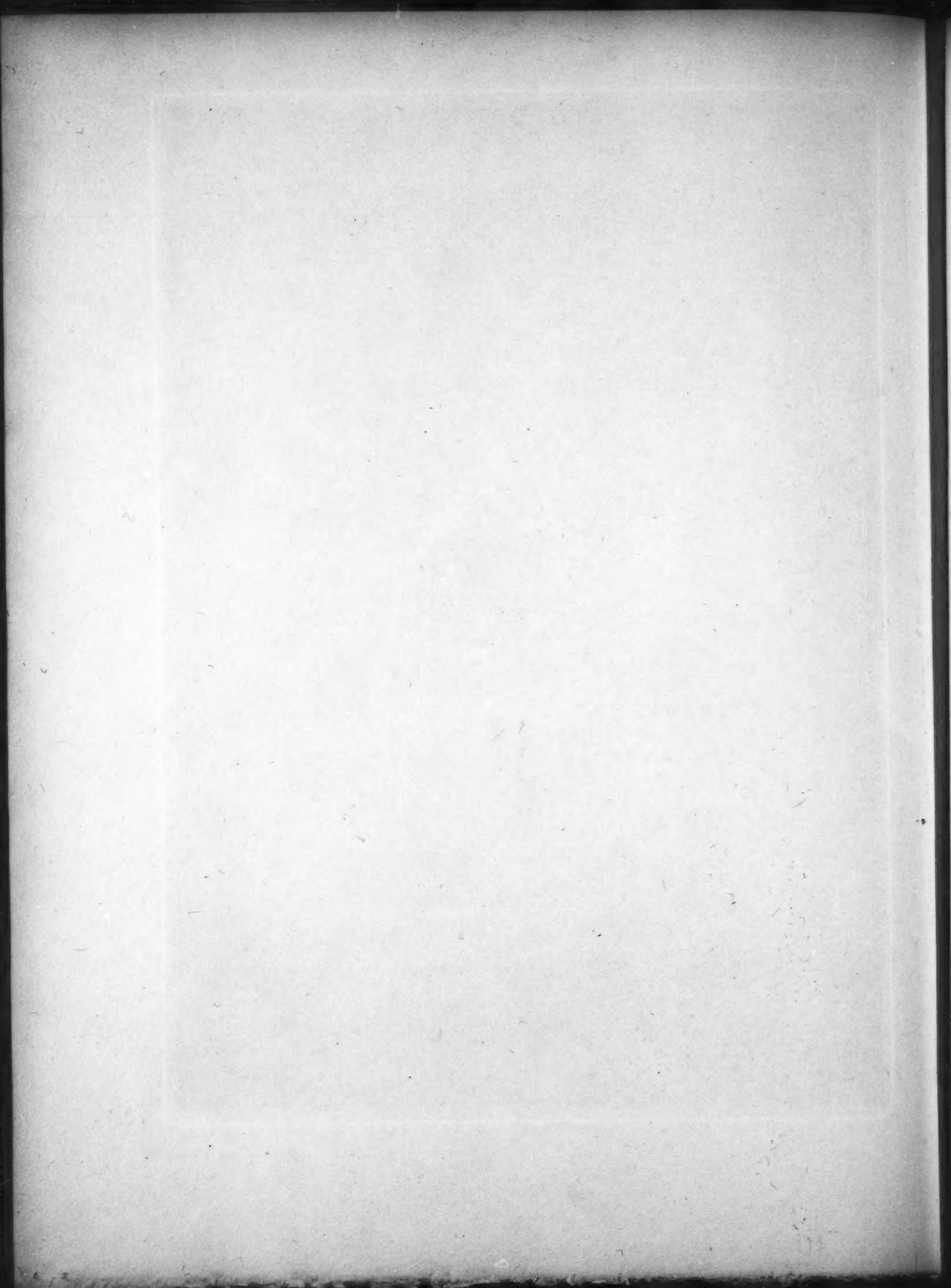
the commander of a battalion of light infantry on that occasion, "to whom to give the cross which has been sent to me, you have all deserved it : let chance decide." And, as a result of drawing lots, it was awarded to a quartermaster.

In September 1808 the heights of San Boy, strongly occupied by the Spanish, were carried at the point of the bayonet, and a company of light infantry, in concert with a French squadron, repulsed the English landing companies and chased them to their boats, even plunging up to their necks in the water in the heat of the pursuit.

A new Italian division, with a fighting force of 10,000 men, 1,500 horses, and 16 guns, entered Catalonia under the command of General Pino, and commenced operations by the battle of Cardeden, which raised the blockade of Barcelona, leaving two standards and twelve guns in the hands of the victors.

Then began the fierce and merciless war which the entire Spanish nation let loose upon the invaders. It was no longer a question of encountering regularly marshalled troops, but insatiable and almost ubiquitous groups of partisans who devoted themselves to the task of harassing the enemy, destroying all resources, and massacring the isolated, the wounded, and the sick. Every day witnessed a new encounter; in spite of the sufferings and privations undergone in scorching and desolated tracts of country, the Italian troops routed, first at St. Magi, and then at the Puente de la Gaya, the Spanish corps of General Reding; at San Feliu Mazzuchelli's brigade repulsed the 6,000 men under the command of Wimpfen. Engagements were of daily occurrence, and discipline no less than bravery was needed to repulse the enemy. In order to pass the borders of Catalonia, it was necessary that the expeditionary corps should overcome the resistance of the fortified towns. The siege of Gerona was again undertaken in June, 1809; in vain were the Anglo-Spanish relief corps defeated one after another, two furious assaults were repelled by the indomitable resistance of the garrison. It was necessary to continue the blockade, and it was not until the night of September 2nd and 3rd, that six companies of the 1st and 2nd Italian light troops were able to penetrate the suburb and maintain their position under the crushing fire





of the forts and the ramparts, until the arrival of the other columns. On the 10th Gerona capitulated.

General Pino was then summoned to the Tuileries to receive the personal congratulations of the Emperor, and his place was filled by General Mazzuchelli. At that time the Italian corps of Catalonia was reduced to 9,765 men and 816 horses; in nine months this campaign had exterminated 3,235 men and 1,184 horses; in those losses are to be included only 59 prisoners!

It was once more necessary to appeal for reinforcements, and the fresh troops from Italy partly decided in 1810 the hard-earned successes of Hostalrich and Tortosa.

In the campaign of 1811 the siege of Tarragona was a no less arduous undertaking than had been that of Gerona. The Spaniards seemed to wish to make of Tarragona, garrisoned by 8,300 men, the redoubt of the national defence, and both the investment and the preparation for the assault were of long duration. At last, on the night of June 28th, Suchet gave the order for the assault. All the regiments requested that they might be placed at the head of the column. The honour was conferred upon an Italian named Bianchini, who, at the moment of the escalade, rallied the French grenadiers who followed him to his white uniform. A hail of projectiles compelled that handful of heroes to recoil for a moment; but the intrepid Italian, covered with blood, wounded in his head, chest, and arm, collected all his energy, and before expiring carried with him the whole column as far as the *corps de place*. The Napoleon dragoons followed, scaling the breach, and Tarragona was taken and mercilessly sacked. The assault had cost the Italians six hundred men.

"My two marshals, Macdonald and Suchet," wrote Napoleon at this time, "dispute between themselves for the attachment of the Italian division to their corps. I grant it to Suchet because his task is the more arduous. The Italians will, one day, be the first soldiers of Europe; tell the Viceroy that I am very pleased with my brave Italians."

Two years more passed in unceasing warfare with the Spaniards and the English; there was the guerilla war without truce in Aragon, the taking first of Sagonta (October 25, 1811), then of Valencia (January 10, 1812).

It is impossible to recite all these victories, for it would need a large volume to do justice to them. In a word, of the 30,183 men whom Italy had sent to Spain, only 8,958 returned across the Pyrenees; more than 20,000 had perished.

The vitality which the genius and prestige of Napoleon had given to Italy was so great at that time that the hecatombs of the Spanish campaign did not in the slightest degree hinder the sending of troops to *la Grande Armée*. In 1809, the divisions remaining in Italy repulsed the Austrians at the battle of Tarvis, then in Styria. Severoli's division, with the regiment of the Queen's dragoons, attacked Neumark at the same time as the Royal Guard, and took part in the battles of Raab and Wagram; in the latter encounter the Queen's dragoons, in conjunction with the 7th French dragoons, made one of the most brilliant charges of that time against the Austrian cavalry.

As soon as war was declared with Russia, the Emperor-King required from Italy the division of the Royal Guard, and then Pino's division, in all 25,000 men, 7,700 horses, a park of 58 guns with 12 spare gun-carriages, 391 waggons, and 702 transport carriages. These troops formed half of the 4th corps of the *Grande Armée* under the command of Prince Eugène. After their arrival on the Niemen, they distinguished themselves by their successful engagements at Ostrowno and at Viliz; then Pino's division reached Vitebsk, and succeeded in repulsing the attacks of Platow and Vitzingerode, who attempted to take the French army at a disadvantage. The Royal Guard, which was placed in reserve, supported the French centre at the battle of the Moscow.

The Franco-Italian corps arrived at Moscow on September 15th; about the same date Pino's division, reduced from that time to 4,000 fighting men, recovered by the most brilliant charges the position of Malo-Jaroslavitz which the Russians had just taken from the 4th Corps, and there held out until the moment when the arrival of Davout decided the victory. It was on this occasion that the young conscripts of the Royal Guard received as a reward for their brilliant intrepidity the appellation of light infantry of the Guard. Later on, at Viasma, they repulsed

twenty regiments of Cossacks and four battalions of infantry who attempted to cut off the retreat. On September 26th began the march on Smolensk, which the elements, in league against the *Grande Armée*, rendered so disastrous. The Italian corps, nevertheless, acquired new laurels there.

Thus on October 14th, the Russians pressing more closely on the 4th Corps, which protected the retreat, Eugène drew up in line some groups of soldiers of all arms, who, shoulder to shoulder, repulsed the squadrons of the enemy. The latter, however, returned, reinforced by clouds of Cossacks; 20,000 Russians surrounded the unfortunate band of harassed soldiers. The bearer of a flag of truce proposed to Eugène that he should surrender. He energetically refused, lengthened out the battle, and rejoined the main body of the army.

The 4th Corps, which on setting out numbered 52,000 French and Italians, returned across the Niemen with 2,844 men of whom hardly half were fit for service. Prince Eugène, who, after the departure of Napoleon for Paris, had taken the chief command of the army, sent back these illustrious survivors, and after having received a brigade of reserve, directed the minister of war to hastily establish a new mixed division of 20,000 conscripts, 5,000 horses, and 28 guns.

They were young, beardless, hardly disciplined men, who, at Bober, at Dennevitz, at Leipzig, and finally at Hanau, rivalled the courage of the French troops in hindering the passage of the allies and assuring the safety of the retreat.

On returning to Milan, on March 18th, 1813, Prince Eugène found the military resources of the kingdoms reduced to a few dépôts encumbered with cripples, and to conscripts without instructors and without proper officers. Yet the armistice concluded with the allies could not be of long duration, and Italy no less than France was menaced with invasion.

In these critical circumstances the Viceroy displayed a talent for organization not inferior to the courage of which he had given proof in the *Grande Armée*. By his indefatigable activity he succeeded in organizing,

from the beginning of July, a corps of observation consisting of 45,000 men and 1,500 horses, which he immediately directed on the Udine-Pordenone line, in order to avoid being taken by surprise by the resumption of hostilities.

The armistice came to an end early in September, and the Austrians menaced the *débouchés* of Villach and Tarvis, seeking to break the Viceroy's line of defence in the middle. The young Franco-Italian troops prevented the enemy's movement, and received their baptism of fire on the 6th, when attacking General Hiller's troops, which were strongly entrenched at Feistritz on the Drave; the Austrian positions were brilliantly carried after a desperate struggle of seven hours.

Eight days later General Pino, with the Fifth Italian division, attacked General Nugent at Lippa, disabling 500 Austrians and capturing a gun; and later, on the 15th, the Ruggieri brigade dislodged an Austrian corps, and an English landing corps from Fiume.

Not being able to break the front of their gallant adversary, the Austrians attempted to outflank its left wing, and made a movement in the direction of the Tyrol. The reserve divisions already organized were hastily sent towards Trent, under the command of General Giffenga.

It became, however, impossible effectively to cover with 40,000 men so extended a front. Eugène took up his position in the rear on the Adige, and thenceforth all the offensive attempts were crowned with success. The Austrians were successively driven back in the direction of the Val Camonica, and subsequently almost to the north of the lake of Garda; at last, on November 15th, just when they were fortifying themselves at Caldiero to menace Verona, Eugène vigorously attacked and carried their entrenchments with complete success, repulsing the enemy as far as Villanova. The invasion was arrested, the campaign had been the means of instructing the recruits, the experienced troops of the army which had been engaged in Spain returned just at that crisis, and it seemed as if the national soil must unquestionably be safeguarded if the Neapolitan army, then upon the march, should at last arrive to reinforce the troops of the Viceroy.

On January 21st, 1814, the Viceroy learned that Murat had betrayed the

Emperor's cause, and was about to arrive not as an ally, but as an enemy. Thenceforth Eugène collected all his forces, and took up his position on the Mincio, ready to fall successively on either one or other of his adversaries. On February 8th he marched against the Austrians so as to surprise them at the moment of their crossing the river. After a battle which lasted until nightfall, the enemy was wholly routed, leaving 6,000 killed and wounded and 2,500 prisoners. The impossibility of effecting a vigorous pursuit detracted from the importance which should have attached to that success. The Austrians returned to the charge on the following morning. Their second attempt was, however, as futile as their first; the line of the Mincio could not be broken through.

It was in the direction of the Po that the enemy resumed the offensive. Towards Parma as towards Reggio, the engagements which marked the end of February were as successful for the troops commanded by General Grenier.

At Rubiera, on March 7th, 1814, an Italian advanced guard of 300 men received, without yielding an inch, the shock of the heads of the Austro-Neapolitan columns, and Severoli, with his division of 3,000 men, withstood 18,000 of the allies; it was in that last battle that the gallant Italian general fell, one of his legs being shot away by a cannon ball. A worthy emulator of Teulié, he said to General Rambourgt : "My wound is but a slight consideration in comparison with so glorious a day. Replace me, stand firm, and continue to do honour to the arms of Italy!"

Just then the last French contingents were hastily recalled; the tide of invasion had swept over the Meuse and the Seine, and Paris was taken by the Allies. Napoleon, defeated by destiny, laid down the crown which ten years before he had proudly placed upon his brow. The news of these occurrences, propagated designedly, and even by anticipation, by the emissaries of Murat and of the English, threw the populations into confusion, but was powerless to wean the Italian army from the loyal and intrepid chief whom it had seen constantly at its head in times of victory and of defeat.

While awaiting authentic confirmation of this news, Eugène defended, foot by foot, the independence of the kingdom; and it was only when

he learned unquestionably of the abdication of the Emperor and King, that on the night of April 27th he left his palace at Mantua.

The military and civil functionaries besought him to keep the crown which Napoleon had just renounced; in vain did officers of all ranks surround him at the moment of his departure, and seek to keep him among them. His conscience would allow him to make no compromise with the enemies against whom he had fought for ten years, and to the protestations of devotion on the part of those who pressed around him, he contented himself by replying in a firm voice : "Adieu, my brave and good Italians, adieu!"

Neither the army nor the kingdom of Italy any longer existed; the treaty of Paris authorized anew the parcelling out of the Peninsula.

* * *

To the epic of the great wars and to the warlike enthusiasm of the Napoleonic period there succeeded, in Italy, a kind of torpor and depression. For the single monarchy was substituted a kind of weak confederacy, in which Austria exercised an undisputed influence; as soon as a prince felt that his authority was tottering, he made an appeal to the protectorate of the Apostolic Emperor, and under Austrian bayonets order reigned in Italy.

There remained, besides, throughout the whole extent of the Peninsula, only two armies worthy of the name, the army of the kingdom of Sardinia and that of the Two Sicilies. The latter, since the restoration of the Bourbons, presented a strange mixture of the most opposite elements; for the one part, there were the Neapolitan troops properly so-called, which Murat had led in Emilia to defend his crown against the Holy Alliance, and which had gallantly fought against the Austrians in April 1815; for the other part, there were the Sicilian troops which, under the pressure of the English corps which had disembarked on the island, had found themselves for seven years in open war with the kingdom of Naples. King Ferdinand, reinstated on the throne of Naples, was obliged to bring about the fusion of those two armies, and divided the honours and ranks according to the proofs of fidelity given to his dynasty far rather than

in consideration of the military talents displayed under the orders of his predecessor and rival.

Thence sprang two distinct currents—servile ambitions on the one hand, and wounded susceptibilities on the other; but besides this, under a government at once timorous and despotic, discipline, patriotism; and the military spirit no longer existed. "The doctrines of Carbonarism had invaded all ranks of the army, and the 35,000 men of the Neapolitan troops were," said an anonymous writer of the period, "only a showy ornament of the crown of the Bourbons, without in the least degree constituting a national force."

It was by the Sardinian army alone that military traditions were preserved.

At this time the contingent was formed of two classes of soldiers; the one permanent, the other temporary. For the first, the period of service was eight years, at the expiration of which they were definitely discharged. The others passed fourteen months in the service, and were then sent on unlimited furlough, but still remained at the disposition of the government. During a period of eight years they were liable to be recalled and incorporated in the regular army; and then, during the following eight years, they formed part of the reserve.

The infantry regiment numbered four battalions of four companies each, and had in its ranks only 370 permanent soldiers, forming the nucleus of the military unit. The remainder consisted of temporary soldiers; that is to say, men without the military spirit, of indifferent discipline and instruction, and retained too short a time in the service to become true soldiers.

In 1848, when Vienna revolted, the long-restrained promptings after independence at last spurred on the patriots of Upper Italy to vigorous action. Then Milan and Venice drove out the Austrian garrisons. Bologna sent volunteers, the duchies of Parma and of Modena annexed themselves to Piedmont, and 70,000 men assembled to raise the standard of national unity.

Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, was Commander-in-Chief, with General

Franzini as brigade-major, the Duke of Genoa was at the head of the artillery, General Chiodo of the engineers, and Colonel Appiani di Castelletto of the commissariat.

The head-quarters comprised, besides, 240 fully equipped pontonniers, an escort of 280 carbineers, 200 sappers, and 160 *bersaglieri*.

The army formed in five divisions, which were again divided into two army corps.

The first corps, commanded by General Brava, consisted of two divisions. The first, under the command of General d'Arvillars, was composed of the brigade of Aosta infantry, the Regina brigade, a battalion of marines, a battalion of *bersaglieri*, two batteries, and one detachment of engineers.

The second division, under General Ferrero, was composed of the Casale and Acqui brigades, of the Nizza cavalry regiment, of a battalion of *bersaglieri*, and of two battalions of artillery.

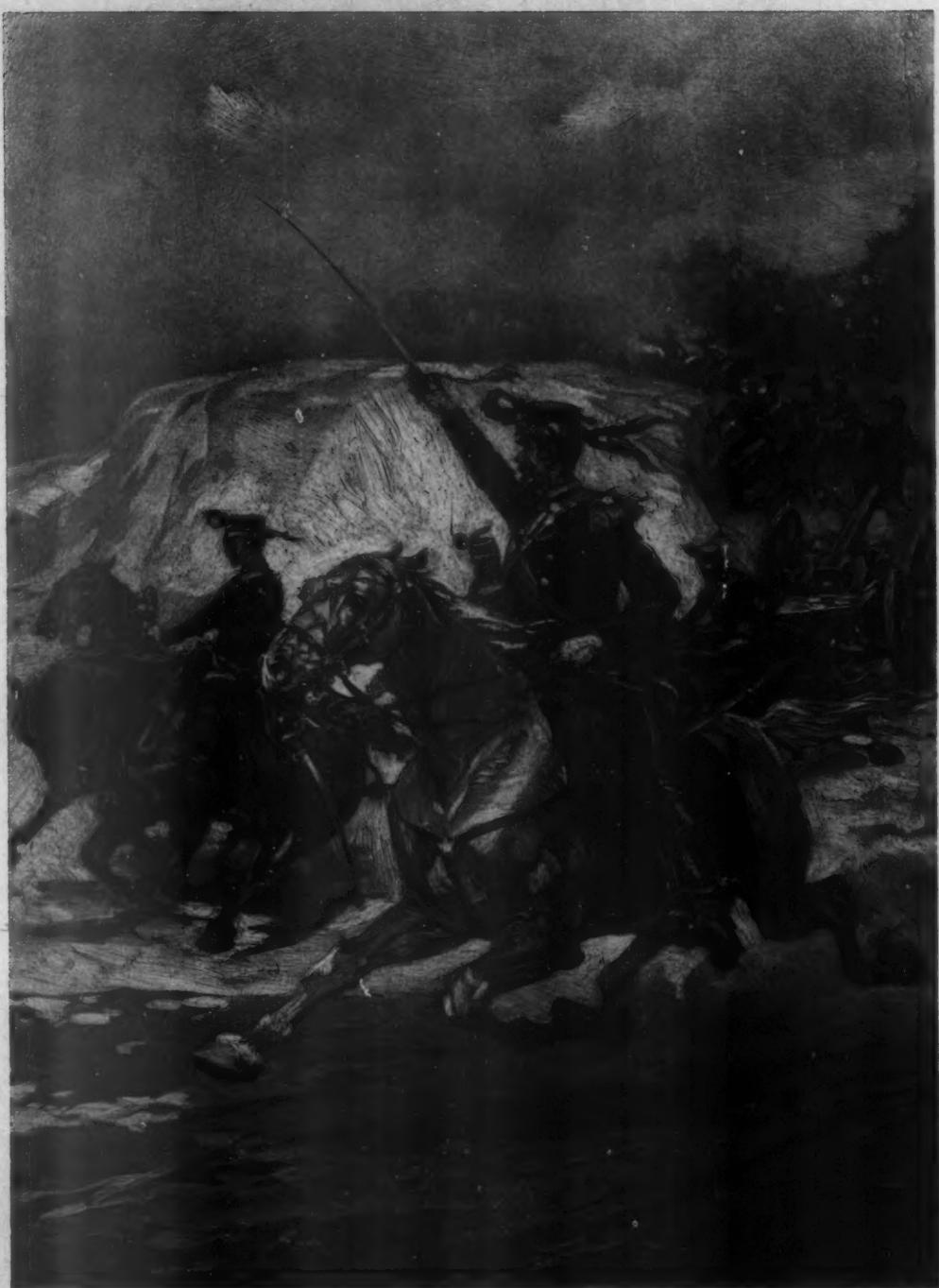
The second corps, under the command of General de Sonnaz, embraced three divisions. The third division, under General Broglia, comprised the Savoy and Savona brigades, the Novara cavalry regiment, a battalion of *bersaglieri*, two batteries, a company of sappers, and two battalions of volunteers.

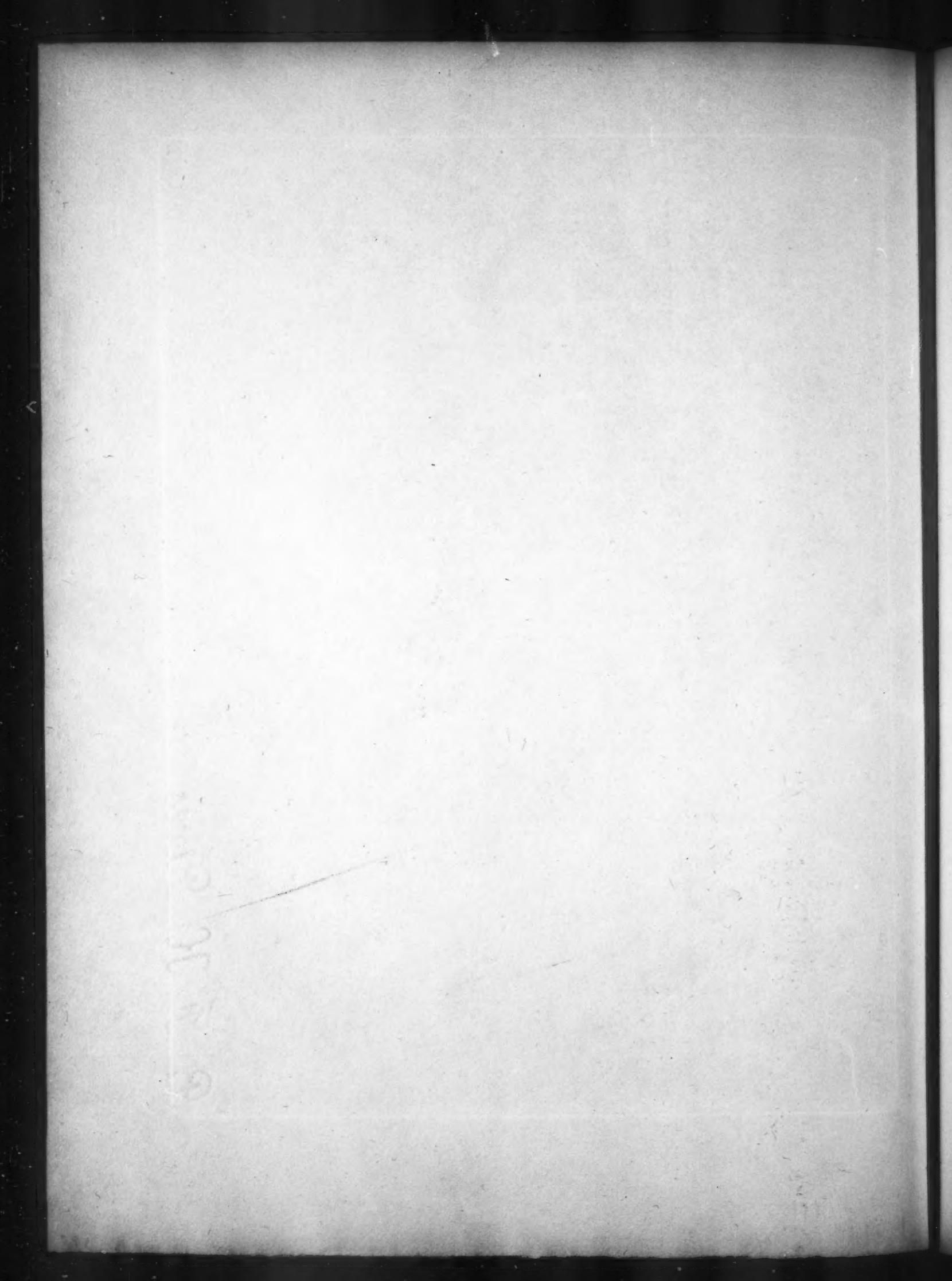
The fourth division (General Federici) included the Piedmont and Pignerol brigades, a battalion of *bersaglieri*, the Piedmont regiment of cavalry, and two batteries.

And the fifth division (of reserve) under Prince Victor Emmanuel, consisted of the brigade of the guards (grenadiers), the Coni brigade, the Aosta and Savoy regiments of cavalry, and one transport company.

In the rear General Visconti was to organize a sixth division, which, owing to delays in the transport and equipment services, could not take the field until the end of the hostilities.

The Sardinian army therefore comprised 18 regiments of 3 battalions, together with the brigade of the guards which had 5 battalions, of which one was a battalion of light infantry, 3 were battalions of *bersaglieri*, and the fifth was a battalion of marines (Real Navi), 36 squadrons of cavalry equipped with lances, sabres, and pistols; 10 batteries of 8, two of which





were mounted, and 2 batteries of 16, and a battalion of sappers, together with a company of miners.

The army so constituted advanced on the Mincio, where the growing numbers of those summoned to military service raised the force to 60,000 men.

The Papal contingents attached to this army formed two divisions, one commanded by General Durando, consisting of 6,000 foot-soldiers, one regiment of whom were Swiss, 1,000 cavalry, and a battery of 8 guns; the other, commanded by General Ferrari, of three legions of the civic guards and of two regiments of volunteers, in all 11,000 men.

Tuscany furnished 5,000 infantry, 150 horse, and one battery and two battalions of volunteers from Pisa and Leghorn.

From Parma came 900 foot-soldiers, one squadron of cavalry, and four guns; from Modena 1,500 infantry, four guns, and a company of pionniers.

Even the King of Naples saw the necessity of yielding to the great national movement : first he sent a regiment to Leghorn, then he mobilized 14,000 men, whom he sent through Ancona to the theatre of operations. Finally in the provinces of Lombardy and Venetia, certain unattached corps, full of enthusiasm, but without cohesion, secretly constituted themselves even in the midst of the Austrian preparations for repression.

We have deemed it advisable to dwell upon the formation of the forces which King Charles Albert was about to lead into the field, because it marks one of the finest phases in the military history of Italy; a generous inspiration passed from the north to the south of the Peninsula,—it was a national army which constituted itself not by the caprice of a sovereign, but by the will of the whole of the Italian nation.

On April 6th the Austrian General Radetsky was beaten at Goito; the Italians reached Mantua, beat the Austrians again at Pastrengo, chased them from Verona, and attacked Peschiera.

But the King of Naples, alarmed by a new insurrection, recalled the contingent which he had sent to the Mincio; the Neapolitan General Pepe refused to leave the army of Charles Albert, and carried with him the greater number of his officers and 1,500 men; the rest of the Neapolitan

corps disbanded itself and returned to Naples. It was a loss of 12,000 men, and Radetsky was even going to Goito to take his revenge, when the Duke of Savoy, Victor Emmanuel, at the head of the regiments of the Guards, changed the fortune of the struggle, and again assured success to the Italian arms.

In the presence of the enthusiasm and bravery which made of that little army a really formidable enemy, Austria determined to send considerable reinforcements to Venetia. The Tuscan corps capitulated before them at Vicenza, the whole region comprised between the Tagliamento and the Mincio was reconquered, only Venice, defended by General Pepe and the remnant of the Neapolitan corps, still held out.

On July 23rd an Italian division, established at Santa Giustina, at Sona, and at Somma Campagna, was dislodged from its positions; thanks to a vigorous attack the Italians regained on the following day the ground which they had lost the day before; but the day following that they were completely routed. The advanced guard of Radetsky attacked Pavia, and on August 5th the army, reduced to the Piedmontese contingents alone, capitulated at Milan.

Once again Lombardy and Venetia fell under Austrian domination, and brutally did the conqueror cause them to expiate their desire for independence.

These misfortunes, however, only served still more to exalt the national sentiment; the cannon's roar had awakened the memory of former victories, and Charles Albert, solicited openly by his people and secretly by all Italy to take up arms again, yielded, but too soon. The seven months of the truce had been unwisely employed by the Piedmontese ministers in augmenting the number of the officers and regiments of the army, without first consolidating the organization and assuring to it the auxiliary services not less necessary in a campaign than the bravery and ardour of the troops.

The regiments had been hastily raised to four battalions, some comprised 1,300 men, others more than 3,000; officers were needed, and commissions were given to a considerable number of sergeants, without

judgment and without proofs of their fitness for the rank conferred upon them. No one thought of utilising the national guards for service in the rear and for garrisoning fortified places. As for the artillery, its reinforcement with horses had been neglected. It would have been possible to turn to better account the army which had proved its courage in the first stages of the campaign of 1848.

The Sardinian army, which in 1848 mustered 45,000 men, 4,000 horses, and 96 guns or howitzers, had in seven months been raised to a force of 125,000 men, of whom 95,000 were under arms. It consisted of 29 regiments of the line and 2 of grenadiers, 5 battalions of light infantry (*bersaglieri*), one of marine infantry, 8 cavalry regiments, 3 squadrons of guides, and 2 of carbineers, 19 batteries, and 2 companies of pontonniers, 6 companies of the engineers and transport service.

These forces were grouped in seven divisions of two brigades each, together with a brigade of the advanced guard, and a provisional brigade.

On March 12th Charles Albert declared war with Austria for the second time. The campaign lasted four days and was a double disaster for Piedmont.

The want of cohesion could not fail to produce in 1849 repulses analogous to those which had put an end to the campaign of the preceding year. The troops engaged successively without uniformity of purpose, without combination of effort, and their onslaught on well-disciplined and well-conducted forces was repeatedly repulsed. In spite of remarkable deeds of valour, the Piedmontese army was beaten on March 21st at Mortara, and its hasty retreat, effected at night, only augmented its losses in killed and wounded, in consequence of the disappearance and capture by the Austrians of a considerable number of fugitives.

Two days after, this demoralized army, having lost confidence in itself and in its leaders, found itself under Novara in the presence of the Austrian columns; it fought with all the obstinacy of despair, and until 3 o'clock in the afternoon the day seemed to be that of the Piedmontese; but their vigour flagged before the methodical march of the Austrians and their constant reinforcement by fresh troops. In vain did the Duke of Genoa attempt towards night, when the wings were beginning to waver, to retake

Bicocca, the key to the Italian positions. All his efforts were fruitless, the retreat degenerated into a panic, and the infuriated and conquered army, crowding into Novara, subjected the inhabitants to all the horrors of pillage.

This time all hope seemed lost. Charles Albert, discouraged, abdicated twelve days after having declared war with Austria. The persistent reverses of the Piedmontese in these two campaigns were due, not to the quality of the troops, but to the absence of good generalship and to the want of provisions.

On the rich plains of Lombardy the troops often found themselves destitute of everything, and Charles Albert said in abdicating : "The lack of provisions has constrained us to abandon the conquered positions and to leave to the enemy the regions already enfranchised by the Italian arms."

It fell to the lot of one of the generals to expiate the faults of all. General Ramorino, having held himself aloof from the field of battle and immobilized in a position in the rear, instead of hastening to the field of Novara, had, the same evening, on learning the news of the defeat, beaten a precipitate retreat to Arona, without firing a shot. He was condemned to death.

On the morning of May 23rd, the garrison of Turin formed itself into line on the parade ground; the unfortunate general slowly passed the troops in review, and then, having saluted the colours, he proceeded towards the place of execution, saying in a firm voice : "I die a victim to too great an affection for my country; time and history will one day justify me!" Then he commanded the men to fire, and fell.

* * *

Raised to the throne by the abdication of his father, and prepared for kingship by the bitterest of probations, Victor Emmanuel, from the day of his accession, had no other thought than that of causing, by dint of energy, the triumph of the ideas of unity which the insufficiency of the Piedmontese army had failed to effect. To take rank among the European

sovereigns, and to efface the memory of the defeats of 1849 was his first object.

The occasion presented itself in 1855. France and England united their forces to arrest the expansion of Russian domination in the Black Sea, and the young King of Sardinia hastened to engage in the Eastern Question, and obtained authority from the Emperor Napoleon III. to add a corps of Piedmontese, consisting of 15,000 men, to the expedition to the Crimea.

On April 14th, 1855, he sent the colours to the expeditionary corps, mustered under the orders of La Marmora at Alexandria, and formed in two divisions. The embarkation took place at Genoa, there being as many men on Italian vessels as on English transport ships.

The twenty permanent regiments of the Sardinian army had each furnished a battalion in order to form ten provisional regiments. The two divisions included, besides five battalions of *bersaglieri*, one regiment of five squadrons of light cavalry, six field batteries of six guns, and one battalion of engineers.

The Sardinian corps formed into line at the moment when General Pélissier, Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces, attempted to enlarge the front of his position towards the right, in order to invest Sebastopol. To succeed in doing this it was necessary to carry the heights which commanded the valley of the Tchernata.

On May 24th, whilst the French were storming the bridge of Traktir, a bold diversion of the Sardinian troops decided the success of the attack; but the very day when the lunette Kamschatka and the great fort fell into the power of the Allies, La Marmora succumbed to the attacks of the cholera epidemic which ravaged the camp of the allied forces.

One of the most brilliant feats of arms of the campaign was unquestionably the defence of the little redoubt of Zig-zag, where, during the night of August 15th and 16th, 300 Piedmontese fought for three-quarters of an hour against the whole of the 17th Russian Division. The onslaught of the Russians, who were unceasingly reinforced, was too much for the tenacity of the defenders; the little troop was compelled to retire, but, keeping the enemy at a distance during its retreat, it regained the

positions of Tchernata where it was received by the divisions of Faucheux and Levaillant. The Russians attacked bravely, but after a desperate struggle they were compelled to fall back and renounce the attempt to carry in front the heights held by the French and the Piedmontese.

"Your army corps," said General Pélissier to the commander of the Sardinian troops, "has conducted itself admirably. It has shown itself worthy of the former renown of the Piedmontese army; the Emperor and France shall know it!"

At the moment of the assault of Malakoff the action was too concentrated for the Sardinian troops to take an active part in it. The French alone shared with the Russians the honours of that day, which may be described as equally glorious for the vanquished, disputing the slopes and the platform foot by foot, as for the victors, whose irresistible dash carried the tricolour flag to the summit of the fortifications.

The winter of 1855-6 was passed in the huts. In that severe climate, far from the chief centre of supplies, with no resources but the provisions sent from Toulon and from Genoa, the Piedmontese soldiers had, like our own, to display all their qualities of ingenuity to improve their winter quarters.

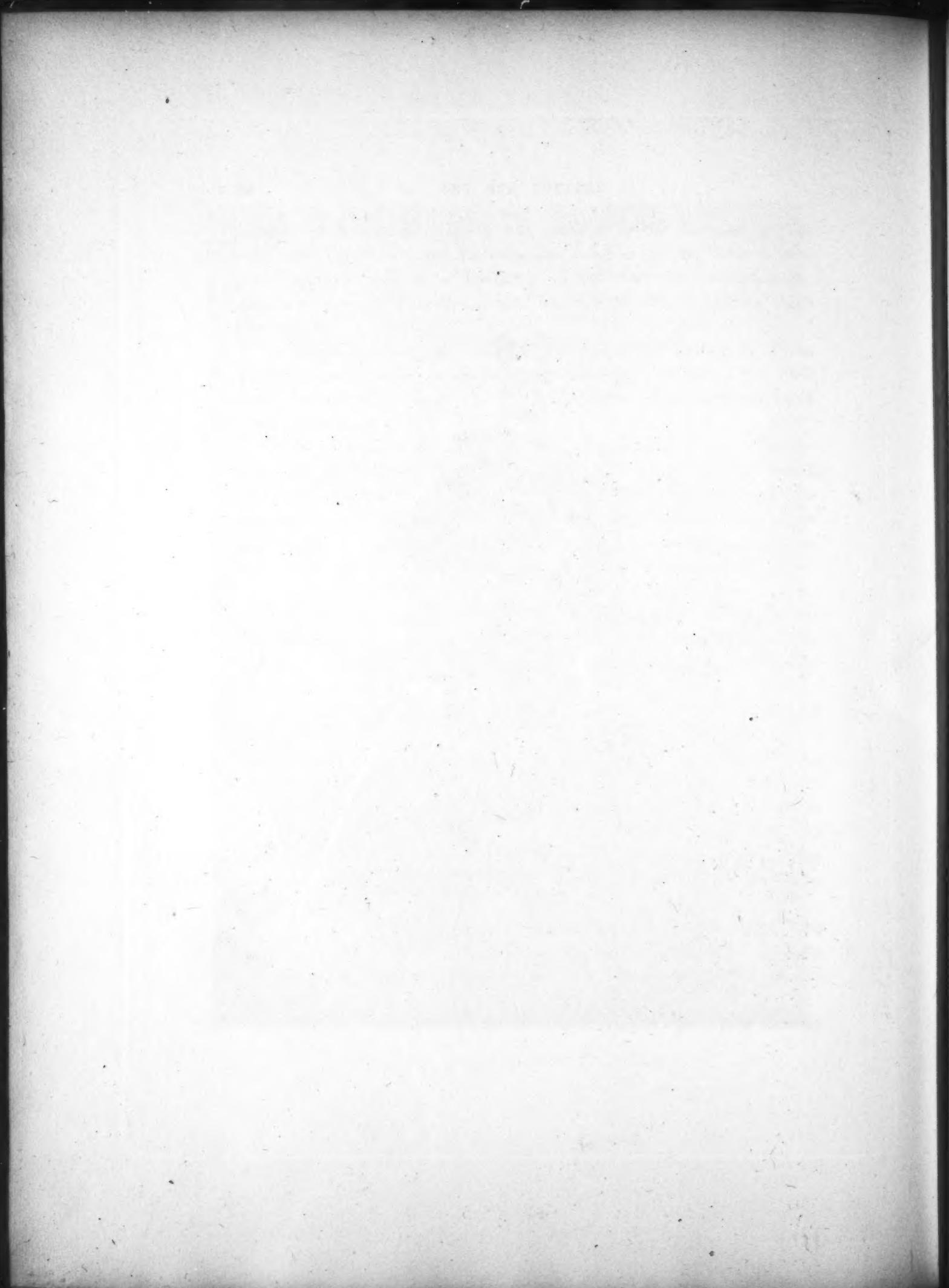
In a campaign, the genius of the leaders is not everything; that of the soldier has also an important part to play; for him it is not a question of combining strategic movements, but of contriving to make out of the scanty means at his disposal everything which is necessary to enable him to live and to live merrily. Our Zouaves, past-masters in the art of overcoming difficulties, had first worthy imitators, and very soon joyous emulators in the Piedmontese, and those long months of fog and cold could not subdue the high spirits and the cordial friendship of the Allies.

A continuance of the struggle was anticipated; 3,000 troops were again sent from Italy as reinforcements; but the Congress of Paris having culminated in peace, the troops re-embarked between April 16th and May 19th, 1856.

It has been too frequently said that France, who had principally incurred



M. Marcelli



the expenses of this arduous war, retired from it with nothing but unprofitable, though glorious trophies. For the first time she entered into a continental war with the same eagles and the same colours forbidden by the Holy Alliance, to victoriously encounter the conquerors of 1814; she changed the balance of European power to her advantage, expunged the treaties which for forty years had held her in bondage, re-established her military supremacy, and proved to her friends as well as to her enemies that she was a power whom it would be necessary to take into calculation.

As for the Sardinian troops, they brought home to their sovereign, with the rehabilitation of their military reputation, the right of speaking as a king at the Congress of Paris. Piedmont had thenceforth the power of making the voice of Italy heard in the Councils of Europe.

* * *

From 1856, Victor Emmanuel, assured of the alliance of France and of the sympathy of her sovereign, pursued without intermission the national undertaking.

In the spring of 1859, Austria, irritated by his progress and uneasy at his designs, declared war against him.

The French troops passed the Mont Cenis, traversed the neck of Mont Genèvre, and disembarked at Genoa, whilst the Sardinian army formed itself on the line of the river Dora Baltea, of the Bormida, and at the fortress of Alexandria.

It numbered 5 divisions of infantry, one of cavalry, and a brigade of light infantry from the Alps, composed of Garibaldi volunteers. Altogether there were 56,000 foot, 4,000 horse, and 114 pieces of artillery. Each division of infantry consisted of four regiments of four battalions; two battalions of *bersaglieri*, a regiment of four squadrons of cavalry, three batteries of six guns, and a regiment of engineers. The cavalry division comprised four regiments of four squadrons, and two mounted batteries. Finally the Garibaldian brigade numbered three regiments of two battalions, and one squadron of guides. At head-quarters there were,

in addition to the staff, three batteries, one detachment of pontonniers and sappers, and one escort of carbineers.

The campaign was opened brilliantly by the Sardinian cavalry; at Montebello, six squadrons of the Novara, Montferrat, and Aosta regiments, attached to the French division under General Forey, drove back the Austrian hussars and broke through some squares of infantry, thus contributing to the success of the day. The vigour of the attack of this isolated division on the 5th Austrian corps, had been such that the Austrian General Stadion, beating a retreat, reported to General Giulay, the general commanding in chief, that he had had an engagement with an entire French corps and an entire brigade of Piedmontese. He added that the initiative taken by the Franco-Sardinian troops convinced him that they were sustained by strong reserves (May 20th, 1859).

Napoleon III. well knew how to profit by the error by which, from that time, the Austrian Commander-in-Chief was misled, and to confirm him in the assurance that the whole strength of the allied forces was concentrated on his left. He conceived the project of directing demonstrations on the Po, while outflanking the Austrian right and anticipating them in crossing the Ticino.

This flank march in front of the enemy's positions could only succeed if the movement was cleverly disguised, and if the left, now become the pivot of the change of front, held firm. This mission was entrusted to the Sardinian division of General Cialdini.

This division contrived to do the work of a much larger force. After some bold skirmishes it carried the Austrian positions at Borgo and Vercelli at the point of the bayonet, and then, reunited on the morning of the 30th to the Duranto, Fanti, and Castelborgo divisions, it passed the Sesia and dislodged the enemy from Palestro, whilst the rest of the Sardinian corps carried the positions of Vinzaglio.

On the morning of the 31st the Austrians again assumed the offensive with three brigades; the Piedmontese held firm, repulsed the attack on their whole front, and the 3rd Zouaves fell on the left flank of the enemy and drove it to a canal into which the *bersaglieri* and Zouaves forced it at the point of the bayonet. Victor Emmanuel, who had fought

in the front rank, had conferred upon him by our brave fellows the title of "the corporal of the Zouaves." The Austrians had lost in that second battle of Palestro seven guns, 800 prisoners, and 1,300 killed and wounded.

On June 3rd the French army crossed the Ticino, and the Sardinian army placed itself in reserve at Galliate.

In the desperate battle of Magenta the respective situations of the troops did not allow the Piedmontese divisions to come into action; the Fanti division alone was able to hasten to the scene of the conflict towards evening, at the moment when the battle was ending in a furious *mélée* in the village of Magenta. Although it had been retarded in its march at the *débouché* of Turbigo, it nevertheless rendered substantial assistance to the Espinasse division.

The allied sovereigns entered Milan on June 7th, where they were received with enthusiasm by the people, who saluted them as their liberators.

The Allies continued their forward movement. The Sardinian troops gained the Adda by Vimercate, the Garibaldian brigade at the extreme left reconnoitred the march towards the Alpine passes, while the French army proceeded on Cassano, in the direction of Brescia. All the allied forces marched straight on the Mincio.

They came into collision on June 24th, over an extent of 14 kilometres, with the Austrian army in occupation of Pozzolengo, Solferino, and Cavriana. The Sardinian troops, formed in two columns separated by too great a distance, attacked Pozzolengo vigorously; the greater part of the day was passed in repeated assaults, which miscarried before the dogged resistance of the 8th Austrian corps.

At last, towards evening, Pozzolengo fell into the power of the Piedmontese. Then the Durando division proceeded in the direction of Solferino; a vigorous attack by the Austrians barred the passage to San Martino. General Mollard, at the head of the Coni brigade and Montferrat regiment, dashed in vain on the Austrian positions; he was repulsed, but protected by the artillery of the Cucchiari division; he re-formed in the rear, and his columns, augmented successively by the Casale and Acqui brigades, returned to the assault. This new effort was again frustrated by the dogged resist-

ance of Benedek's corps. At nightfall, at the moment when the French troops succeeded after a desperate struggle in occupying the heights of Solferino and of Cavriana, the reserve of the Sardinian corps gave a new impulse to the divisions of the first line. The Austrians yielded at last all along the line, and the Austrian army was completely routed; but the day cost the Allies dear; the Piedmontese had 5,540 men *hors de combat*.

From these victories, which the menacing armaments of Prussia eventually interrupted, sprang, if not the total reinstatement of the kingdom of Italy, as it had been instituted by Napoleon I., at least a decided advance towards the unification of the Peninsula. Victor Emmanuel was acknowledged as King of Italy, and transferred his capital to Florence. Lombardy, Piedmont, Tuscany, and Sardinia were at last reunited under the sceptre of the House of Savoy.

France retook her natural frontier of the Alps. "France," said Victor Emmanuel, in his proclamation to the populations which were once more to become French, "opens her arms to the peoples of Savoy and Nice; for my part, painful as is this separation, that which consoles me is that the two nations which have just fought side by side for a sacred right, will, always united, continue to secure the triumph of justice and liberty; and that in the near future, we shall salute each other again as comrades in arms, amid shouts of victory!"

* * *

The prestige of the Sardinian army, after the campaigns of 1854 and 1859, was such that it could not fail to facilitate the annexation by the new kingdom of Italy of the small unarmed States among which the rest of the Peninsula was divided. In comparison with the battles of Tchernáïa, Palestro, and San Martino, the exploits achieved during the conquest of the kingdom of Naples and of a part of the Papal States scarcely seem to deserve special mention. The sieges of Ancona and Gaeta, together with the battle of Castelfidardo, extended the power of Victor Emmanuel over a territorial area as considerable as that acquired by

the campaign of 1859. These easy successes, however, while producing great political results, rank as of only secondary importance in the annals of an army.

The immediate and natural result of these successive annexations was the complete transformation of the army, which was increased in 1859 from five to eight divisions, by the incorporation of the Lombardic soldiers, and by the formation of the *Chasseurs des Alpes* into a regular brigade.

In 1860 the contingents from Tuscany and Emilia were reunited with the Sardinian army, which thus became doubled in effective strength. The Italian army at that time consisted of fourteen divisions.

In 1861 and 1862 the Neapolitan contingents and the Garibaldians of the South were amalgamated with the corps of troops already raised, introducing among the latter elements both inferior and lacking in discipline. Desertion and the fraudulent evasion of service, both hitherto unknown among the Sardinian soldiers, made their appearance at the same time. The army increased, but, for the moment, only in numbers; several years more were needed to make "Italians" and soldiers of recruits such as these, drawn from regions where military traditions were lacking as much as was the sentiment of national unity.

"The army," states the report of the Italian staff dealing with the campaign of 1866, "did not at this time exhibit military power proportionate to its numerical strength, notwithstanding the patriotism by which it was animated.

The whole of the infantry was, it is true, armed with the rifle, while the *materiel* of the artillery was new and of the most improved pattern; but there were many things wanting. Although the army as a whole was as well equipped and as capable of mobilisation as any other, the arrangements in regard to the filling up of vacancies and the organization of the reserves were still quite undeveloped. As for the operations of the rear service, they had hardly been sketched out.

At the beginning of the year 1866 the kingdom was divided into six military departments, Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Naples, and Palermo, constituting twenty-three territorial divisions.

The army consisted of forty brigades of infantry (each brigade comprising two regiments of four battalions, a battalion consisting of four companies); five regiments of *bersaglieri*; four regiments of cavalry of the line; seven regiments of lancers; eight regiments of light horse, including one of hussars and one of guides (each cavalry regiment consisting of four squadrons); five regiments of field artillery, each with sixteen four-gun batteries; three regiments of sixteen companies of stationary artillery; one regiment of pontonniers in nine companies; two regiments of sappers consisting of eighteen companies; three transport regiments of ten companies; with ambulance and commissariat corps.

In round numbers the army mustered 14,000 officers and 190,000 men; while by calling out the reserves these numbers could be increased to 354,000 men.

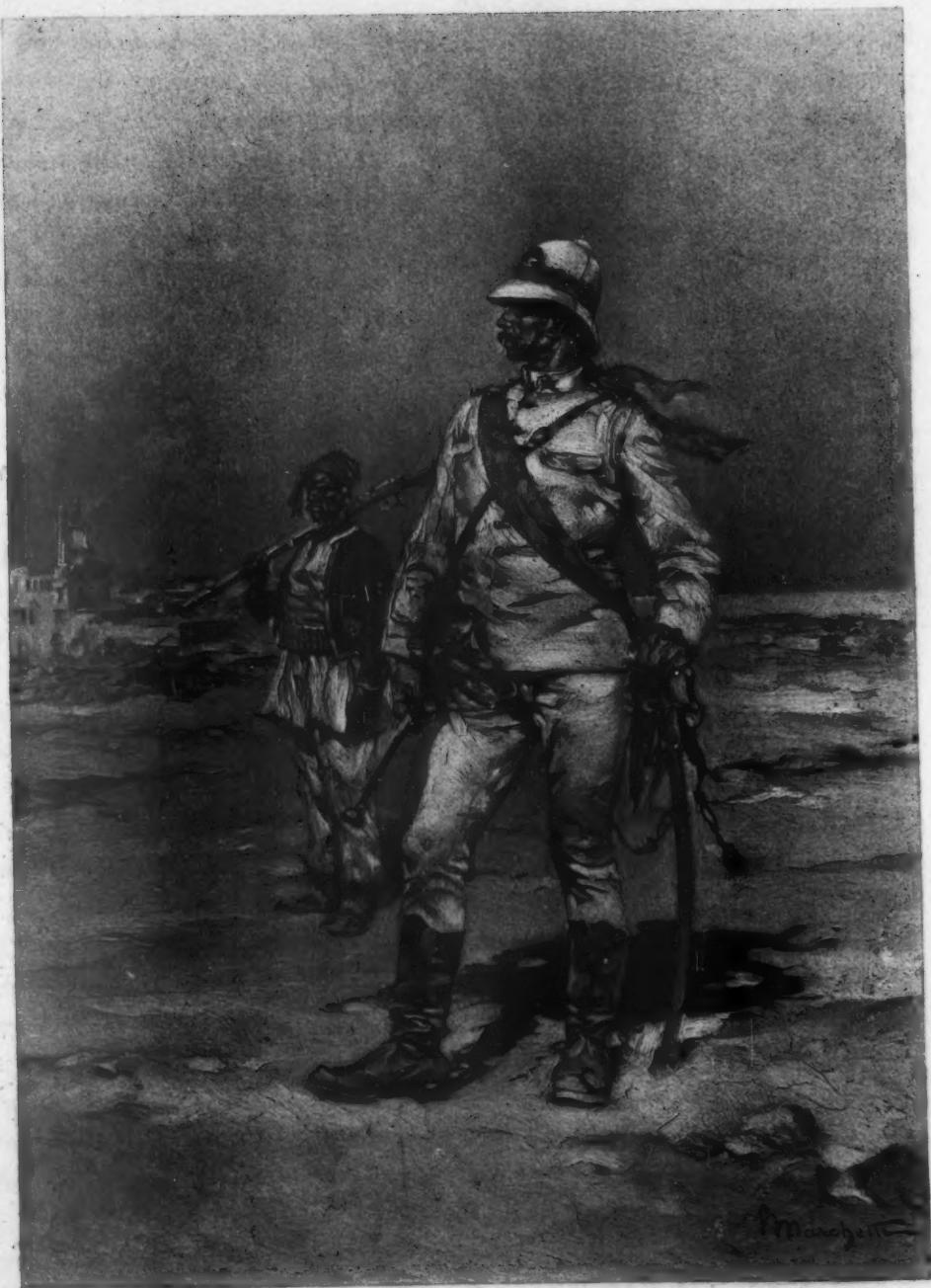
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Following on a series of events which it would take too long to relate, and concerning which there is no lack of pamphlets and confessions by most of the actors, an offensive and defensive alliance had been concluded between Prussia and Italy with the assent of France. This alliance, directed against Austria which still held Venetia, had for its object the realization of the programme interrupted in 1859 by the German armaments.

Everything seemed ready for the struggle, and war was declared by Victor Emmanuel against Austria on June 20th, while the Prussian armies were invading Bohemia.

From Berlin came advice to the Italian army to carry the war through, and resolutely take the offensive. This was simply inviting Italy to follow the course pursued in 1809.

The Italian forces were grouped in four army corps, three of which consisted of four, and one of eight divisions. There was also one division of reserve cavalry, with one general reserve of artillery, making altogether 360 battalions, 95 squadrons, and 75 batteries. The volunteers, under the command of Garibaldi, formed five brigades or ten regiments, and numbered 38,484 men.



On the evening of June 22nd, Victor Emmanuel's troops extended in *échelons* between the lake of Garda and the Po. On the following day the Cerale, Sirtori, and Brigone divisions of the first army corps crossed the Mincio, leaving the Pianell division on the right bank to watch Peschiera. The second army corps made for Mantua, and the third corps, with the cavalry division, went by way of Goito in the direction of Villafranca.

The whole army advanced with a blind assurance, knowing absolutely nothing as to the whereabouts of the bulk of the Archduke Albert's forces.

A sort of fatality seemed to cling to the operations of the Italian army. Staff orders, prescribing movements in the direction of Mantua, took from the field of battle an entire army corps and one brigade in addition, at the very moment when, on June 24th, at six o'clock in the morning, the Archduke suddenly appeared on the left flank with all his forces.

A general engagement immediately began, in which the Italian left, centre, and right divisions all took part, without being able to render assistance to each other.

On the left, the Monte Vento batteries, dismounted by the fire from twenty-four Austrian guns, were unable to cover either the retreat of the 1st and 5th divisions, or that of the first army corps reserve.

Three battalions of *bersaglieri*, the 2nd, the 8th, and 13th, by a series of bayonet charges executed with a brilliancy beyond all praise, alone kept the Austrian forces in check, which were hurrying in pursuit of the repulsed divisions.

On the right, the 7th and 16th divisions, paralyzed in their movements by the daring charges of the Austrian uhlans and hussars (who broke the infantry squares), and decimated by an overwhelming fire, rendered the marching columns panic-stricken.

In the centre the fight was obstinately continued from morning till evening: the 3rd, 8th, and 9th divisions, instead of forming one solid body, came into line one after the other on the heights of Monte Croce, Belvedere, and Custoza. The unsupported 3rd division, opposed at the

outset to a superior force, succeeded in repulsing several attacks of the enemy, but deprived of its reserves, and under the fire of powerful artillery, it at last gave way and retired in disorder on the Mincio, relieved by the 8th and 9th divisions. One battalion of *bersaglieri*, with six battalions of Sardinian grenadiers—3,500 men at the most—alone defended the Monte Croce positions. Harassed by several hours' continuous fighting, they bravely resisted the assaults of the Austrian columns, which they repulsed four times in succession. A fifth vigorous attack by fresh troops, opportunely brought up by the Austrians, was necessary to force these gallant fellows to retire. The Duke of Aosta, brother of King Humbert, was wounded while leading a charge of the *bersaglieri*.

Near at hand lay the cemetery of the village of Custoza, which had been valiantly captured by a part of the Govone division, and about three o'clock in the afternoon the Italians seemed to have the advantage at that point. But in vain did the 9th division seek reinforcements and ammunition; the whole of the Austrian reserve, kept until now in the rear, marched up in good order, and about 22,000 fresh troops fell on General Govone's division, which numbered 10,000 men. The latter held out until six o'clock, but when they were beaten, all resistance was over.

The Italian army was hopelessly defeated, that fatal engagement having cost it 3,000 men killed and wounded, and 3,600 taken prisoners.

* * *

The military disaster of 1866, compensated for by political successes, acted as a lesson, and brought neither discouragement nor weakness to the Italian army, which, even in the hour of defeat, had shown a courage and a power of resistance which augured well for the future. As was the case at Novara, the fault lay with the commanders, while the scattering of the troops destroyed all the effect of the valour and dash displayed by the numerically feeble bodies which successively engaged with the enemy.

Without a moment's loss the Italians set about reforming the faults which experience had demonstrated, and from that time dates a well-employed period of reflection and organization, the effects of which may perhaps be better appreciated by the result of the campaign on the littoral of the Red Sea than by the easy capture of Rome.

It is well known with what ease the Egyptian garrisons of Massowah and Assab were deprived of the forts they held by the little Italian expeditionary corps, and how the flag of the House of Savoy was hoisted simultaneously, without the striking of a blow, at every point where Abyssinia had access to the sea. In 1885 and 1886 the occupation by the Italians was only interfered with by a few skirmishes with wandering bands of robbers, but when the Commander-in-Chief, General Gene, wished to render the approaches to Massowah secure by occupying the advanced points of Vua-a and Saati, the Negus took umbrage at the march towards Osmara, and sent a large body of men under the command of Ras Alula to oppose the Italians.

On January 25, 1887, two companies, with a section of artillery and 300 Bashi-Bazouks (native soldiers in the pay of Italy), took up a position at Saati and hastily entrenching themselves, repulsed, after four hours' fighting behind their shelter, the repeated attacks of 5,000 Abyssinians. On the following day the Commander-in-Chief despatched from Massowah a column of about 500 men with two mitrailleuses, to reinforce the valiant little garrison of Saati. When midway, at about half past eight in the morning, the column was unexpectedly attacked by large bodies of natives. A desperate and furious struggle ensued. When the ammunition had run out, Lieutenant-Colonel de Cristoforis ordered the survivors to present arms, and from that moment they stood with drawn swords, shoulder to shoulder, and without yielding a foot dearly sold their lives. At half past eleven the battlefield of Dogali was silent: amid the mounds of black corpses the five hundred dead Italians formed a row of white. "They were all lying in ranks, as if drawn up in line!" said the report of the commander of the force sent, too late, to their relief.

The bloody episode of Dogali echoed throughout Italy, making every fibre of patriotism vibrate anew, and presented a noble example to the

army. Since January 1887 the Italians have been subjected to no attacks in their Red Sea possessions.

Dating from 1887 the formation of a colonial force has been part of the regular organization of the army.

This force consists of two regiments of light infantry, one squadron of light cavalry, a detachment of artillery, and a company of sappers, together with the auxiliary services.

In addition to this, the band of Bashi-Bazouks has been formed into an *orda* of four battalions under the command of a colonel, and numbers about 3,000 men. In each company the staff of Italian officers is supplemented by two native chiefs (*jus-baschi*), assimilated to the rank of sub-lieutenant.

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(*To be continued.*)





MINOR PICTURE SHOWS IN PARIS

II



The water-colour painters in the Rue de Sèze made way in April for the Exhibition of pastels, which is not less successful. If the show is not a very large one the quality of the work is highly satisfactory; almost every example being admirably executed, and full of a sincerity of expression which is rarely found in the more laborious efforts of the brush. Pastel, like water-colour, is above all things the record of a single moment; a keen eye and a sure hand, dexterity, swiftness, and decision are the qualities it demands, and which give it its special aroma.

Again, like water-colour, pastel had for above a century lain under a cloud—nay, a total eclipse. Of water-colour we have always seen a little, too little indeed, and with processes and tricks which were not legitimate water-colour, such as the immoderate use of body-colour,

and a system of retouching and rectifying which ruined its freshness and seriously impaired its charm; still, it was water-colour. With pastel it was otherwise; the use of it was entirely forgotten; the fascinating material of Latour, Chardin, Rosalba, and Liotard had been engulfed in the revolutionary maelstrom with the superannuated fine manners of the *ancien régime*, the playful verse of Boufflers and Parny, with hoops, powder, and patches. Pastel was an aristocrat and proscribed. It was lost in the crowd of departed dignities, and emigrated as they did. But emigration crushed its spirit; the Restoration could not bring it back again; romanticism held it in sovereign contempt; the second Empire knew not even its name. Strangers brought it to life again, and its resurrection, which is but recent, is due to an Italian, de Nittis.

At the present day, pastel has been restored to all its honours; expert hands have taken up the crayons, and use them with diligence and wonderful skill; they have extended its province, turned it to every account, and made it serve every need. Formerly pastel was employed only for portraits, but now it is applied to all classes of work. Landscape and flowers, still-life and genre, heads and the nude, interiors, and scenes of outdoor life engage it in turn, it has unexpectedly returned to life in the treatment of every subject known to art, and triumphs on all sides. For the last five years its chief adepts have combined in a compact group, and formed a society analogous to that of the water-colour painters; not less numerous, but in no respect a rival, for the two lists include, for the most part, the same names.

There is, however, this difference: the water-colour artists repeat themselves; pastellists have not yet said all they have to say. The inferiority of their material and the poor quality of modern paper send them in constant pursuit of something better. Like the Italians of the sixteenth century, who ground their own colours, the pastel workers of to-day are forced to make a great many experiments, equally advantageous to art and technical knowledge. No more nice hand-made papers to be procured, such as were the delight of our forefathers; how many fruitless trials must be made before a suitable quality is found! No more vegetable-dyed chalks, at once fat and friable, compounded, as the old recipes tell

us, with milk, adhering lightly to the paper instead of crumbling off, as ours do, into neutral dust, so dry that there is no hope of getting it to stick. How is everything to be told with such limited means? But our artists have solved the problem notwithstanding, and the progress they have achieved in five years, merely in the technique of their material, allows them now to vie with the most delicate and subtle and most admired pastellists of the last century. Their fifth exhibition amply proves the assertion.

The variety of subjects is amazing. Only seventeen artists have exhibited, out of thirty forming the society, and though several of these have sent but one example, it must be owned that these are superb. In the catalogue of eighty-four numbers three are studies of the nude; but these three are signed by Puvis de Chavannes, Besnard, and Dubufe *fils*, and are equally thorough, sure-handed, and characteristic.

Note the sculptural solidity of the figure M. Puvis de Chavannes shows us, seated on a rock, in one of those calm and simple landscapes he loves so well. The nymph turns her back on the spectator, fair and unrobed, but for a light drapery across her knees; her legs are crossed, and the diffused daylight, subdued by the dense foliage of needle-leaved pines, falls broadly on the powerful figure, massively modelled like an antique marble. Her right hand lies lightly on her knee; her left arm hangs by her side, and in that hand she holds a bunch of chrysanthemums. All round the soil is purple with heath, and white daisies open their starry flowers; the chrysanthemums, heath, and daisies symbolise "Botany." The allegory is perhaps a little obscure; but if you imagine the figure in the place it is to fill, at the Sorbonne, in the great wall-painting of which the cartoon was exhibited in the Salon of 1887, you will find it sufficiently explicit, and only think of the exquisite charm of this figure, so nobly treated and so perfectly adapted to the requirements of art as displayed on a mural surface in a setting of stonework.

Do you prefer life and movement, warm young flesh and velvet skin, subtle colouring, novel harmonies, in short all the variations which a master's hand can play on the everlasting—and unfailingly captivating—theme of woman? Go to M. Besnard; he has a bust of exquisite beauty,

dark indeed, but of subtle delicacy, in which every charm meets every other, combined with the utmost finish of technique. With it he sends some portraits. A blonde with rather large features; a brunette with eyes that laugh defiance, half hiding a suggestive bust under a warm fur wrap; a study of a woman's head of enigmatic purport against the orb of the moon; and a large portrait, delightfully composed, of a young woman with her hair dressed high and powdered, seated on a yellow sofa among Louis XVI. accessories. Her features are sweet and fragile-looking, but full of distinction. The most charming and solid piece of work here, however, truthful with its touch of fancy, at once impassioned and sober, is the marvellous study of the nude sent by the same artist, one of the most perfect things M. Besnard has ever done. It is broadly stamped with his sign-manual.

From M. Besnard to M. Guillaume Dubufe is a world-wide leap. Not that I mean to say that I do not like M. Dubufe's work; he is clever, very clever, prodigiously clever, and I know few artists of the present day who are capable of producing so remarkable a nude study as his of a woman. She is reclining on a couch covered with red velvet, over which lie the sheeny folds of a green silk curtain, and the graceful, fair head smiles at you with a too enticing smile. One of her arms is coquettishly raised, the other lies on a rose-coloured silk counterpane. The bust is a triumph of art; the pulpy texture of fair flesh, pearly, rosy, everything at once, is perfectly rendered, and equally tender and firm. The whole picture, though graceful, is somewhat meretricious, as usual, with a rather finikin and mincing grace; this time, however, the over-refinement is not unpleasing; it has a mysterious mingling of modern and old-world fragrance, as it were of bergamot and otto of roses with ylang-ylang and Lubin, which attracted me greatly. If I might offer advice to M. Dubufe it would be to continue in this path; this season's inspiration has produced the best piece of work I have ever seen of his.

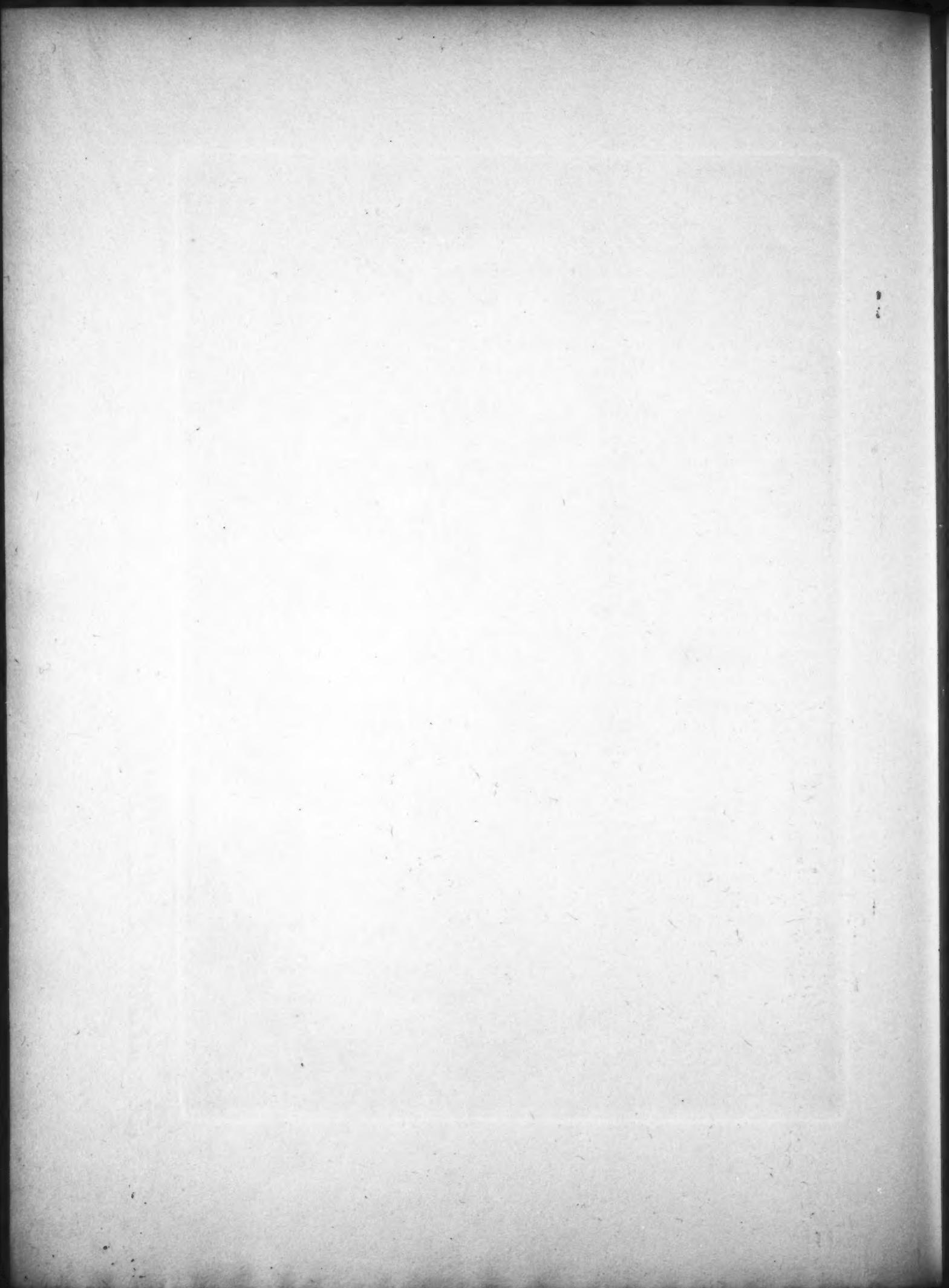
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A sincere artist is M. Dagnan; he thinks for himself and gives us something to think about. When he paints a portrait he does not set

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to work to show us the first face that may come to hand, against a conventional background, with that lordly indifference which a dexterous hand does much to justify, but which takes no thought of the individual life of the model. M. Dagnan aims higher; I have always found him a careful student of expression, striving to impress the spectator, as he is himself impressed, by the character and moral nature of his sitters. Whether he studies a man or woman of the world, the outcome of inherited civilisation, with a physiognomy refined by mental exercise, or turns his gaze on a more primitive type, on humble folks inured to the rough toil of tilling the soil, we always find the same depth of insight. He gives us no tricky dexterity, no borrowed graces, nothing but unvarying reverence for the truth, seconded by a solid and sterling technique.

Two years ago, at the Salon, we admired his "Pilgrimage to Saint Anne d'Auray," and we shall admire still more warmly the two typical heads in this gallery which set him in the foremost rank of our younger painters, a "Woman in Black," with a handkerchief in her hand and the folds of a heavy veil about her head, beautiful with her expression of concentrated grief; and, yet more, the "Woman in White." The melancholy pensive face, framed in a thick white hood reminding us of some portraits of the early Renaissance, is seen in the dimmer daylight of a room, against the verdure out of doors of a landscape seen through an open window. It is a full-toned and very fine piece of work, modern, but with the stamp of a great tradition.

The feeling expressed by Madame Cazin is of analogous quality. The two fair heads she shows us, side by side, of a country maid and boy, are portraits full of innocent grace, and their sweet simplicity appeals to us at once, not to speak of the pure and learned harmony of the colouring.

Nothing of this kind is to be found in M. Thévenot's pictures. He starts from another point of view. In those sentiment predominates, in him keenness of eye is the ruling factor, and M. Thévenot, obeying the guidance of his eye, achieves very imposing results. This artist, for his joy, lives chiefly in the country; he observes, he looks about him,

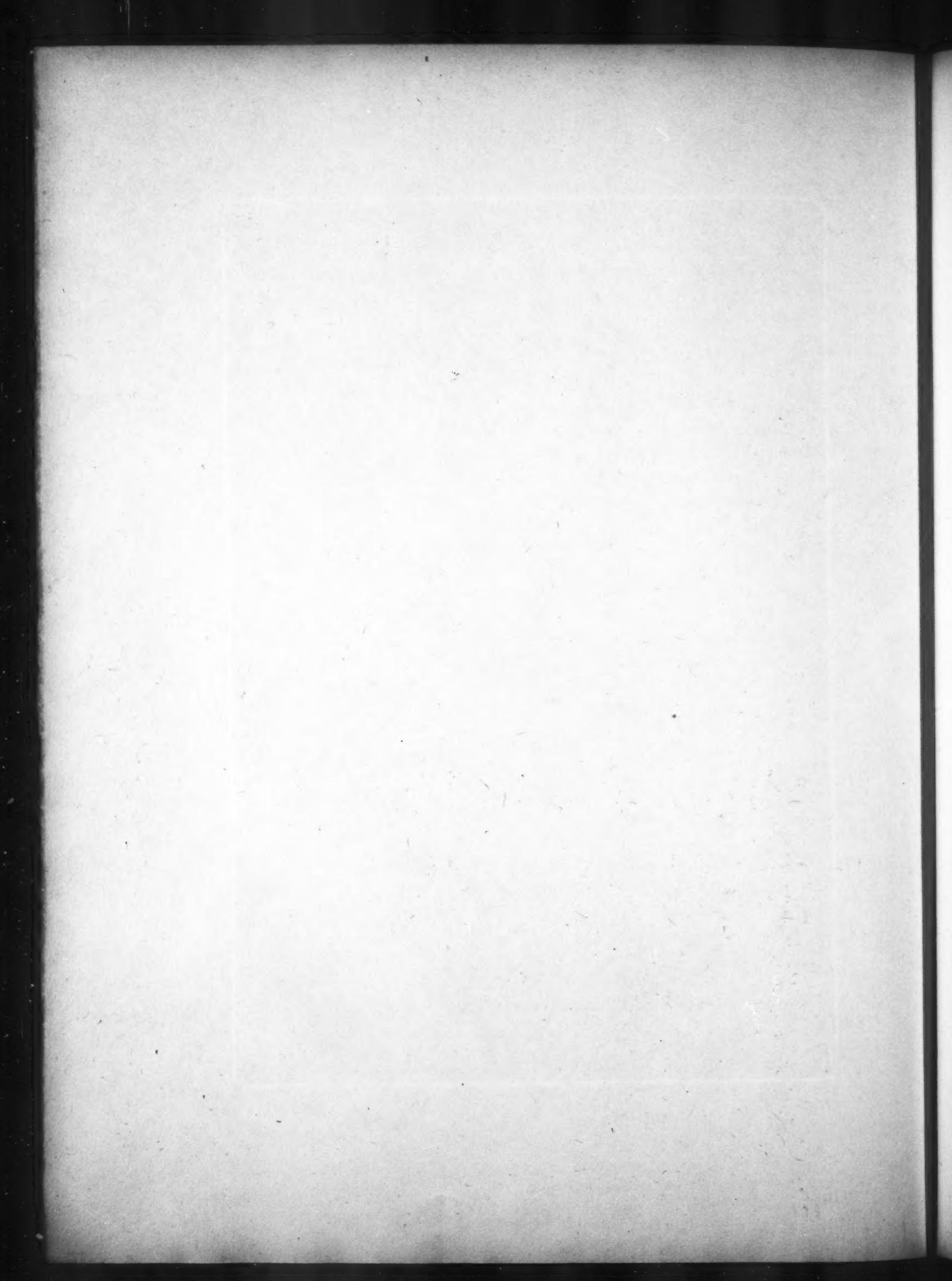
and he finds subjects which carry him on and up to wondrous heights, in proof of which he here gives us three "Studies," as he modestly calls them, which are the delight of all who can appreciate a fine thing. First we have a young girl in a grey frock learning a lesson—her catechism no doubt—out of a book. Her hands rest on the desk where her weary eyes have been conning the open page, and her heavy head has dropped on to her hands, gradually hypnotised by the monotonous black lines of letterpress. Here we see a fair child of twelve, alone in a church, her blue pinafore in gay relief against the regular brown rows of wooden benches. She sits somewhat uneasily on a chair in the nave, and while she waits to be called to confession is reading through the long list of sins in her prayer-book, to some of which she must plead guilty.

The third picture shows a mischievous face against a dark wall pierced by a barred window; a big boy resting his hands on a wicker basket, in which, I suspect, he is carrying off the plunder of a poaching excursion. And these three heads are full of life; the lad's sparkles with boyish glee; the little maids are full of gravity, the deliberate gravity which is characteristic of their age; and the different expressions, equally well rendered, are quite delightful.

And after appreciating their charm we may enjoy the workmanship, which is beyond description free and firm. Note the delicate modelling of those fresh cheeks, the certainty of the drawing, the frank purity and fulness of the colouring. There is no taint here of the anaemic hues and meagre quality of colour, which of late years have been the rage, degrading to a low and uniform key of purely artificial concords the full clear tones which strike the healthy eye.

Here is M. Blanche, who has studied Whistlerian "symphony," and hankers after the Japanese; however, he does not load his work with more of them than is pleasing; he measures the infusion with care, adapting it to our habits and tastes and point of view, still refractory under this too curious ingenuity. He has just developed a well amalgamated vein of originality, and he takes care to add rounder and firmer relief. He is no longer so rigidly faithful to the low key of





colour to which he formerly sacrificed too much, and, if he still prefers neutral tints, he nevertheless handles the brighter tones of rose and white with great skill, as we see in his pretty portrait of Mademoiselle O. C.

It must also be recorded to his honour that he prefers subjects a little out of the common, and that whatever charm the secrets of a young girl's face may have for him, he is even happier in his interpretation of the stronger individuality of young women. I have a great weakness for the clearly drawn profile of Madame Robert de Bonnières. The enigmatical look of set purpose, emphasized by the upright collar of her coat and the broad felt hat trimmed with a white muslin veil, impressed me so acutely as to be unforgetable. As to the portrait of Madame Georges Jeanniot—her figure, laced into a black velvet bodice, leans forward a little, and the face, curiously calm in style, with smoothly parted hair, is so strange a contrast with the large deep eyes and their imperious, searching gaze, that in spite of a flash of humour which lights it up, it strikes me as something more than a portrait; as an unimpeachable record, an affidavit of evidence more trustworthy than the most elaborate psychological novel, bearing witness for our great-grandchildren to the highly strung physical and moral condition of a Frenchwoman of the most refined type in the latter years of the nineteenth century.

Yet, I must add that, while I so greatly admire M. Blanche's portraits of women, I care no less for his studies of children. I saw, in his blue room, lighted through a blue Japanese blind, a picture of a solemn little girl in a white frock, seated on a low chair with a doll on her knee; and the natural simplicity of the subject, the delightful strain of blue tones, formed a whole which quite charmed me. It is one of M. Blanche's happiest hits in the minor keys he is so fond of.

A great feeling for decorative treatment, elegance which, though genuine, is somewhat mannered, and a fine sense of the value of light colour, are the distinctive marks of M. Jules Machard's female portraits. Happy are the fashionable fair whom he represents, and whose smiling faces, set off by faultless dress, look forth from a background of tapes-

try or plush hangings! Happy the damsel in blue whose picture, one of this artist's best works, suggests her first appearance in the "world," at the age of sweet illusions, sixteen! And do not let these gracious personages tempt you to overlook an expressive head of a youth, and a delicate profile of a young girl with a garland of mimosa.

M. Émile Lévy, in spite of his conscientious care, has often been blamed for the commonplace literalness of his female portraits. He is doing his best to cast off this reproach; his treatment is freer and more refined; a little heavy still in two of the pictures he exhibits, but in the third we find a breadth of style which we scarcely could have looked for.

This *bambino* of eighteen months shows something very like inspiration; the dimpled limbs, darkly-hued but fresh, the crisp black hair, are vividly real against the white sheets of the little bed and the rose-coloured screen behind it; it is all painted with enthusiasm as well as precision. "A Bavarian lady," wrapped in a grey cloak, and wearing a tall black head-dress embroidered with gold, against a landscape background; and, yet more, "An Aged Widow" are worthy companions to this superb and lifelike study. In the old woman's wrinkled face, weary eyes, and grand but faded features, we may read a pathetic epitome of human sorrows, and with this a no less marked expression of sweetness, a high poetic charm which grief has not destroyed but enhanced.

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What pretty effects of landscape are to be got out of pastel! Grey skies pierced to the blue, towering cliffs whose jagged ribs stand forth to defy the waves, and break them into swirls of white foam; or again, apple trees in bloom, red roofs, and pools in which the pale water reflects the doubtful blue of a spring sky; here we have the low level of ripe corn rippling under a light breeze, and there a wild ravine, its steep sides hirsute with the meagre shapes of stunted trees, while a brook leaps over the stones. A little further, and above the roaring waves, an Ossianic battle is going on between the dying fires of the

sun and piles of lurid cloud; sheaves of light sparkle on the gloomy waters whose crested waves still flash with transient gleams, and reflect the crimson glow and low gaps of sulphur-coloured light. This is M. Nozal's treatment of landscape, stern, tragical, and solemn, with the rarest smiles.

M. Montenard, on the other hand, has nothing but smiles; it is not for nothing that we find ourselves in Provence. We cannot forget under our grey canopy the caressing softness of that blue sky, those warm breezes, and no less warm waves. Sunny shores, stretches of hot soil, where, at long intervals, bask clumps of dusky olive trees, and far, far away, white specks on blue water, the islets off shore; what a perfect scene! And it is a scene which M. Montenard knows well; he plays with it with matchless skill, never changing it, but giving it infinite variety of aspect.

Look at his "Isles of le Frioul," his "Great Olive Tree," "In Provence," "The Cornice near Marseilles." You may pass by his "Young Girl" in her straw hat and red petticoat, but pause again over the magical effects his chalks have found in a "daffodil sky," still tinged here and there with rose, and reflected with softened lines in the slow, calm swell. The execution of this "Evening at Sea" is exquisitely facile and delicate in gradation.

In M. Duez we find no less facility and delicacy of workmanship; but his sea-pieces bear the stamp of greater breadth and more serene dignity. In his "Sunset through Rain," look at the water, black in the shadow of the clouds that have gathered over the sinking orb, scarcely tinged by a pallid gleam, and again, at another effect of the same class, a high vault of sky crossed by parallel bands of black, rose-colour, dark blue, and sulphur-yellow; and this "Low Tide, Evening," a wide expanse of sand over which the grey shadows are stealing, and the dark level line of sea with a strip of blue sky above it, and a bank of inky clouds piled up to a vast sepulchral pall. In such works as these you cannot fail to feel how grandiloquent is the power which here interprets the language of nature.

Not that this painter has no ear but for the thunder of the waves;

he listens with equal sympathy to the whispering of flowers. He portrays with loving fidelity and a keen apprehension of the spirit of each plant, its drooping or haughty attitude, its manners, so to speak, shy or reserved, proud or clinging, and nothing can be more delightful in point of art. He gives us climbing roses, carnations, hydrangeas, irises, some fragile, some stalwart, in jugs or tall glasses, in stone or earthenware jars, and the blues, yellows, and pinks melt into each other in faint and learned harmony. But the thing which gives these studies their true value is their manly firmness and dash. However expert a woman's hand may be, she never rises superior to grace; power is beyond her reach. And this gift of power is brilliantly displayed in these works by M. Duez, where every touch is broadly laid on by a hand to which hesitancy and repentance are alike unknown, while it ignores every unnecessary subtlety of detail. Here we see no useless minuteness, but an indescribable independence and decision, with splendour of tone; this is the characteristic note of all these flowers, especially, I may observe, of the really grand piece called "Black Flowers" which would do honour to the finest collection, and which I do not hesitate to pronounce a masterpiece.

Vigour is the leading feature of M. Yon's work. When describing his water-colour work I enlarged on his startling power as a colourist. He adopts the same pitch, but a good deal subdued, in his pastels. His "Chrysanthemums," yellow, pink, red, and orange, are piled in an enormous bunch in a burly copper pot; a fan and a pair of yellow *Suède* gloves lie on the dull red table-cloth, and these reds and yellows are superb; they are loud, but not too loud, the key is strong, but untainted by vulgarity; the work does M. Yon honour. I have no less praise, perhaps rather more indeed, for a scrap of sea view, "Among the Dunes," so melancholy, so temperate, and so true, that I could not weary of enjoying it. A row of thatched cottages, a stretch of sand, a peep of the sea under an iron-grey sky, tinged with rose-colour; that is all; but what has not the artist put into it?

Madame Madeleine Lemaire makes but a small show this year in the minor exhibitions. She is reserving her powers no doubt for greater

triumphs; but epicures in art grieve over her absence. She is not, however, altogether absent from the pastel show; she has sent an interesting portrait of a lady of the size of life. The sitter is not commonplace; her features are regular, with red hair partly hidden by a black lace hat, and her expression derives attractive originality from a slight squint. The dress, too, is a curious combination of neutral greens, and the work is altogether decorative and in fine taste.

M. Adrien Moreau, in his "Young Poachers," boys in a guise of rustic simplicity, sporting on the sedgy bank of a stream, gives us a piece of honest and delightful work, a fit introduction to the splendid studies which M. Léon Lhermitte has picked up in every part of rural France. Here are a whole series of sterling works, some mere sketches, some careful studies, interiors and open air scenes, grey skies and blue, the blazing sun of the south and the humble evening lamp; and these various and manly pictures produce a striking impression.

"Bathing," a pastel by M. Léon Lhermitte, is a masterly work. In the glow of a July evening, three peasant women have come to breathe the fresher air by the riverside, and the boys of the family have rushed with shouts of joy into the dancing water. The young women are talking to each other, as they absently look on at their play; the filmy rays of the sun, sloping low above their heads, shoot far away to where the reach of the river turns, and light up the village nestling at the foot of a hill, and the clump of trees which shade it. And as the water is so warm, and the hour so fit, while two of the elder lads are dressing, hastily slipping into their shirts, the women think they will give the youngest of all a dip; a morsel of a few months old, plump and dimpled! One of the women strips it in a moment, the second takes it in her arms and holds it up high. "What a beauty!" she is saying, and she smiles at it, before handing it to the third, who is standing in the water up to her knees, waiting for the precious babe.

Everything in this picture is truthful; everything composed with judicious but undoubting art; the drawing of the nude is admirable, with the prominent articulations showing under the lean, boyish

flesh; the attitudes natural and free, the movement acutely observed; see, for instance, this little fellow, stooping down and leaning over to the right, as he carelessly wipes down his arm; and this other, in his bathing-drawers, who stands on the bank, looking on at his companions sporting in the clear water. The figures of the women, too, have the utmost beauty of simplicity, with that stamp of almost august dignity, which is so often seen in folks of simple lives, while the frame is still supple and young, and not yet degraded by the rough toil of field labour. And these figures are surrounded by atmosphere, a translucent air which softens the contours, but gives the figures solidity and the modelling full relief. The execution of the landscape is no less firm; the character and relation of the distances, the perfect gradation of greens, whether subdued or in high light, as the sunbeams fall on them or leave them in shadow, nothing is missed. As I said before, this picture is the work of a master.

Day is done, it is night. The family have gone home, refreshed and rested by the waters. Supper is ended, the children are put to bed, and work has begun again. The three women are sitting round the table, mending the little ones' clothes by the smoky flare of a tallow candle in a tin candlestick. Only their faces are illuminated; the back of their heads is lost in the gloom which gradually deepens to the walls. This is the subject of "Evening work."

Toil begins again in the morning; by the light of a grey day which pours in at an open door, an old woman and two younger ones bend over the pillows covered with wax-cloth on which their lengths of lace are growing, and their nimble fingers plait and twirl the countless bobbins without ever making a mistake. If one of them should happen to look up, she would see a meadow of tender verdure stretching as far as the eye can reach in front, or perhaps the little girl who stands in the doorway, watching the silent and indefatigable workers with absorbed interest.

There are a whole bead-roll of pleasing scenes which charm us as much as these three : the clear waters of a stony rivulet, and ducks floating on it, within reach of the washerwomen, who are dipping and

slapping the linen in front of their cottage doors, under the fierce blue of a cloudless sky; potato-planting in the spring, under pink-blossomed apple-trees; meadows again, and again a harvest field; every chapter, in short, excepting winter, of the annual epic of the Seasons, every mood of the sky, every robe donned by the earth.

* *

It was with the utmost impatience that we looked forward to the opening of the Paris Art Union Club. Its amalgamation with the Imperial Club, in whose old home it has now fixed its abode, after restoring it and adapting it with wonderful skill to giving entertainments, gave rise to endless difficulties, and delayed the exhibition of painting and sculpture, which fashionable curiosity regards, every winter, as one of the events of the season. At last the hour struck, the doors were thrown open on Monday, the 8th of April, to the inevitable mob of idlers and crush of fashion. For a whole week everybody was squeezing, shoving, and stifling everybody else in the great white and gold Louis-Quinze room, smart and fresh, and light and lofty, which henceforth is the club reception-room, surrounded half-way up by elegant balconies of wrought iron, which were soon crowded with well-dressed women in their freshest costumes.

For the present the walls are completely hidden by the motley display of painted canvas, and the tawny gold of the frames. One above another, the two hundred and thirty-five works which are here exhibited have scaled the walls, taken the balustrade by storm, invaded the pilasters, and even taken possession of the floor of the house, on three central screens, against which the surging waves of new comers break and part continually.

The masculine half of the throng is certainly not giving its mind to the pictures; the men involuntarily turn from these to look at the ladies who jostle them. The fair ones have abandoned the defensive armour which shielded their slender forms against the assaults of the winter, and have one and all hoisted the pale-hued flag of spring. There is an all-pervading chirp of eager voices; pretty heads and fresh faces are crowned

with brave structures, hats with bright-hued ribands. The show is not on the walls; it is moving and wandering about the room.

Presently, however, it becomes fatiguing; we come back to the pleasures of art, which never can pall. No private picture show ever presented a more harmonious effect. A Salon before letters, as we may say, but a Salon sifted and purified; from which everything worthless has been excluded. Here are none but great names; noble works predominate, and criticism, to be just, ought to pass none by, for almost all are good. This, however, being impossible, we must be pardoned for brevity.

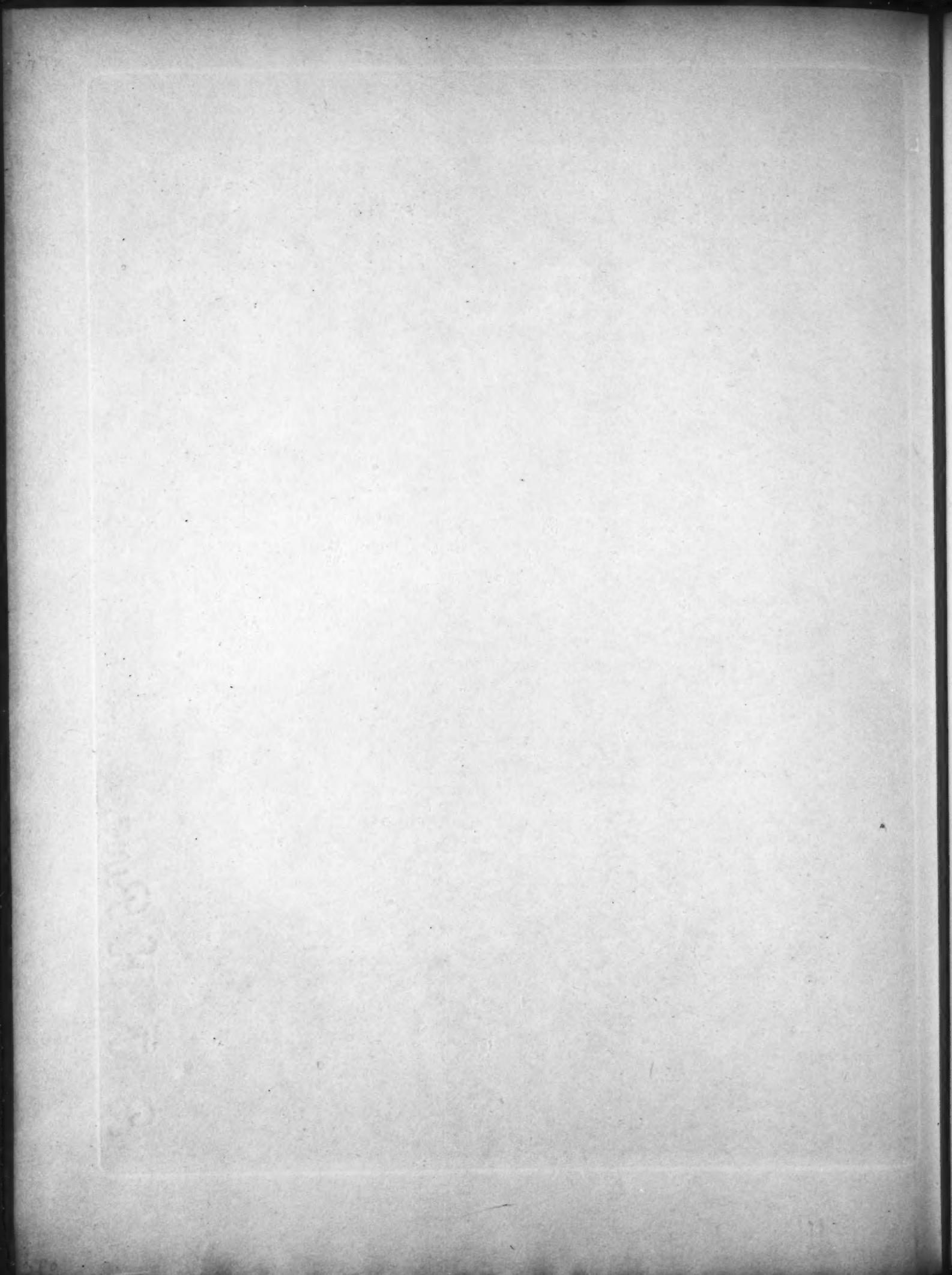
M. Cabanel's work has been the subject of many discussions, nor is this surprising. He was a matchless draughtsman, and in "bits" he was always admirable; but when he came to group his figures and arrange a composition on a grand scale, he was weak. All his larger works suffer from this, and are artificial and cold. In portraits he was perfectly at home; his conscientious workmanship and faithful reference to the model procured him, in the course of a long career, a succession of well-merited triumphs, and his fame will not die with him.

His works of the last ten years have been selected by impartial criticism for remark and praise, such as the portrait of M. Armand, and those of the Founder and Foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor. In the same category we must now place the "Portrait of Mrs. Robert Cutting," a forcible and striking work. The noble and dignified face, the soft, proud eyes flashing brightly under the light snows of white hair, are irresistibly attractive, and rivet the gaze by the fine tone of colour, and sober and solid handling.

The style of M. Bonnat has nothing in common with that of Cabanel. The vigour which so rarely stamps the deceased artist is the very essence of the living one; the glowing colour which Cabanel seemed to avoid, M. Bonnat claims as his prerogative and uses with an incomparably broad and manly brush.

Who can forget the magnificent portraits of M. Thiers, Victor Hugo, M. Grévy, Puvis de Chavannes, and Cardinal Lavigerie, by M. Bonnat? Who will not look with equal delight at this portrait of an aged diplo-





mate, sitting in an arm-chair, whose face shows the lines, ruthlessly reproduced, of painful decrepitude?

Do you know, at the Théâtre-Français, a fair head with sparkling eyes and lips always parted for a merry laugh over brilliantly white teeth? You will recognize it here, thrilling with life and fun, in the vivid and luminous portrait which Carolus-Duran has painted of "Madame Jeanne Samary." The artist is to be heartily complimented on this work, without detriment to this other head, of a man, laughing too, and full of humour, which the same painter gives us. He wears a tall hat slouched over the forehead, and the eyes twinkle with life, and fun, and merriment from under the shade of the flat brim.

There is generally a pleasant surprise in store for us in the portraits painted by M. Georges Clairin; he is not satisfied with being clever, he insists on something better. If his model lacks intelligence and brightness, he lends them to him; if he has them, M. Clairin not only does justice to them, but gives him more. The result is sometimes startling and loud, but this loudness is original and gay; there is something stirring and catching in it which is very captivating; still, M. Clairin is not everybody's painter. His pictures are recognizable among a thousand, and to the last degree decorative. It would seem that there is in this artist's veins an infusion of the blood of Rigaud, Largillièr, Fragonard, Boucher—and this it is which gives such a piquant charm to his portraits; there is a raciness too in the workmanship, a very modern flavour, full of delicious juxtaposition of colour, as, for instance, in this "Portrait of Madame S." What an ingenious scale of white tones, and how bewitching too is this little Harlequin with the killing look in his eyes!

Do you like greys better? You find them in silvery delicacy in a portrait by M. Cormon of "M. Simon Hayem" in his garden; again, and very skilfully treated, in this picture by M. Brouillet, where against a background of flaxen grey plush we see the slight and fragile figure of a Parisian lady of rank, the "Comtesse de B. V." Her thin bust is clothed in a grey cloth dress thrown up against the coppery red chair; there is an attractive puzzle in the expression of her brown eyes, with their slightly mysterious

look, and the whole work is so full of genuine distinction and charm that I should give it unqualified praise, were it not that the bend of the right arm is quite painfully angular.

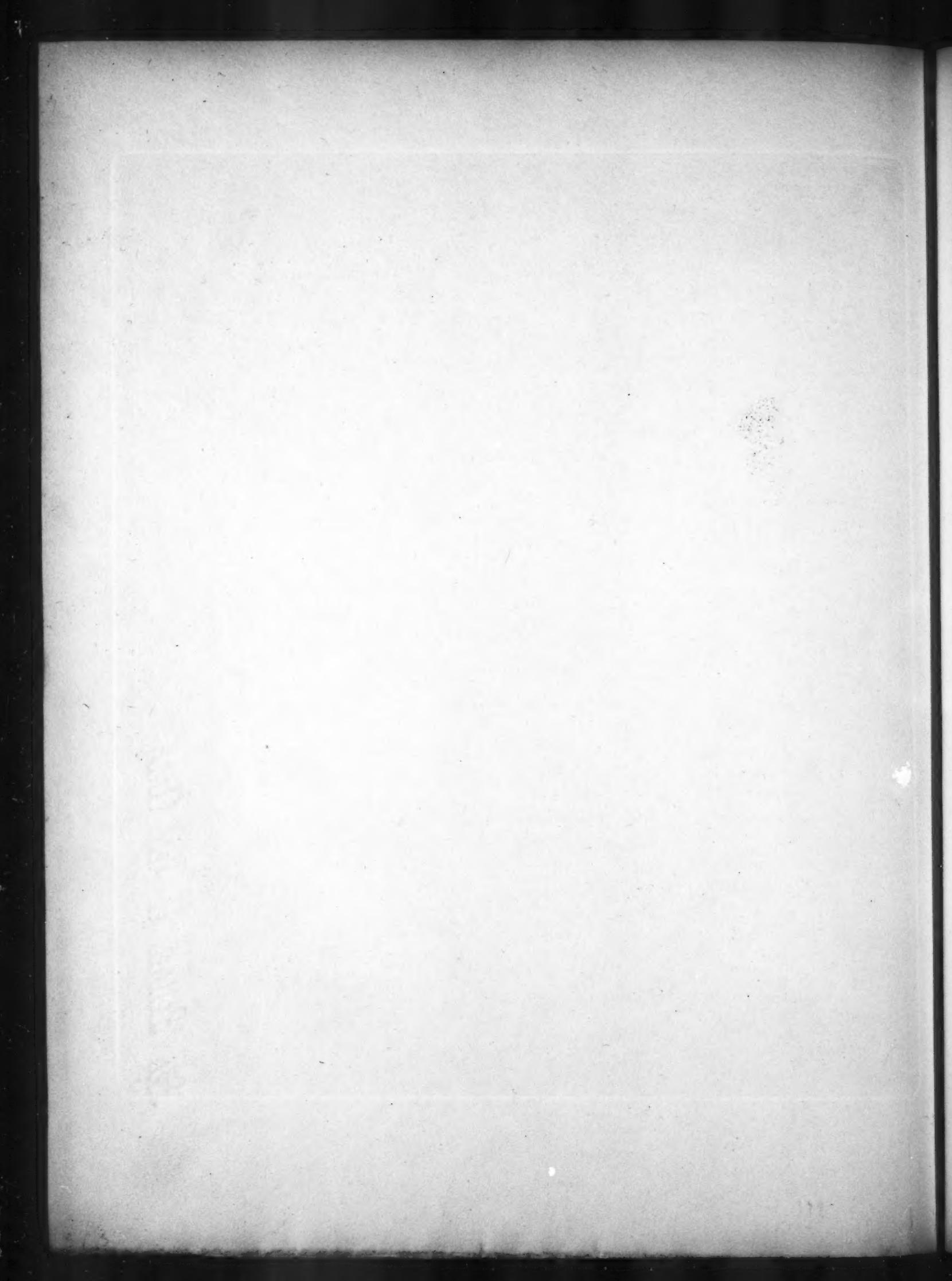
In my former article I made it clear how well I think of M. Élie Delaunay, and how highly I esteem his powerful portraits of men. He is not inferior to himself when he paints the gentler sex. We here have the portrait of a woman of ripe age, in a low black silk dress, closely fitting a somewhat ample bust, and this and the shoulders are splendidly modelled with extreme subtlety of brushwork in a rich and brilliant key. "Madame G." is sitting sideways, her bare arm resting on the back of her chair; we see her profile, and the familiar ease of the attitude is pleasing; it is characteristic and striking, and so adds to the interest of the work, which is in itself well wrought.

There are both solid and brilliant qualities in M. Aviat's two pictures, portraits of "Madame C. H." and "Madame P." The pink dress and friendly smile of one lady, the sweet and gentle grace of the other are alike irresistibly charming. A life-size picture of a young girl in a grey dress, with a dog on her knees, does M. Émile Lévy great credit, the face is artistically treated, the attitude easy, and the whole thing has a touch of distinction which is not always discernible in this painter's work.

The portrait of "Comte Louis de Ségur" is a fine work. M. Berne-Bellecour has painted him, seated at his writing-table, in a large room lined with bookshelves with glass doors filled with antique bindings. The head is thoughtful, modelled with pleasing precision; the general tone, which is somewhat grey, is not therefore deficient in substance.

By M. Benjamin-Constant we have here a portrait of the young "Duchesse Decazes;" by M. Wencker a pretty *Pompadour* picture of "Madame de L.;" by M. Machard a pleasing head of a young girl; by M. Comerre a very elegant young lady; by M. Jules Lefebvre a delightful picture of a lad in a bathing-dress, on the sea-shore—a fascinating arrangement of grey and subdued blue; by M. Aimé Morot a lifelike sketch of a sportsman; by M. Debat-Ponsan an interesting study of a woman's head; by M. Paul Thomas a portrait of a man with a flowing beard, and of a young mother in a garden, in raptures before a baby of a few months





old; by M. Parrot a broadly-painted and conscientious portrait of a young woman in a red bodice and wide black hat; by M. Jalabert a pleasant likeness of a very young man, and another, full of delicate work, of a young woman. M. Monchablon sends a pretty picture of a lady in a white dress, and M. Pomey two solidly painted portraits of ladies.

M. Roll gives the unpretending title of "A Study" to a marvellous piece of painting of the nude. In this, the bust only of a woman reclining on a couch, the fair rosy flesh seems to quiver under the caressing daylight, and it is characterised by a remarkable union of delicacy, grace, and power. In M. Boutet de Monvel's "Woman against a white background," the power is lacking, but it is full of subtlety, dexterity, learning, and indescribable witchery.

M. Adan's fame rests on his rustic scenes, but their rusticity is mitigated though genuine; his sincerity is none the less for a little "get up," nor is this unbecoming. This peasant woman, leaning against a wall with a background of dark verdure, while she shouts through her hands as a speaking-trumpet, must be accounted one of his best efforts. M. Aublet, who also sends a portrait of "Mademoiselle de Blériot," full of refined and ingenuous grace, has seen a party of fashionable women and girls sporting on a springy carpet of turf, and has fixed them on his canvas with very pretty taste, in their eager attitudes, light dresses, and radiant faces.

The "Egyptian Campaign" by M. Detaille is no more than a sketch, but how full of "go!" How cleverly the figures are grouped, and with what spirit the whole thing is executed!

M. Le Blant's "Prisoner" is a soldier of the first Empire, now a captive, and wounded by the Chouans. They are leading him off to the general of the Vendean forces, who is seen coming down a narrow staircase; the incident is treated with the conscientious knowledge, and pure, strong colour which M. Le Blant brings to bear in all he does.

M. Schommer has neglected military life to paint a souvenir of his travels, "The Statue of Colleone" at Venice; the stalwart condottiere, on his ponderous charger, at the top of the tall arch, is painted in a clear pure key, which I find enchanting.

M. Meissonier has sent one of his most finished gems to inaugurate the new room. His "Student," wrapped *à la Louis-Quatorze*, in a full dressing-gown flowered with gold, consulting severe-looking quartos with red edges, which lie on a table covered with green velvet, displays on a microscopic scale the finest qualities of a master.

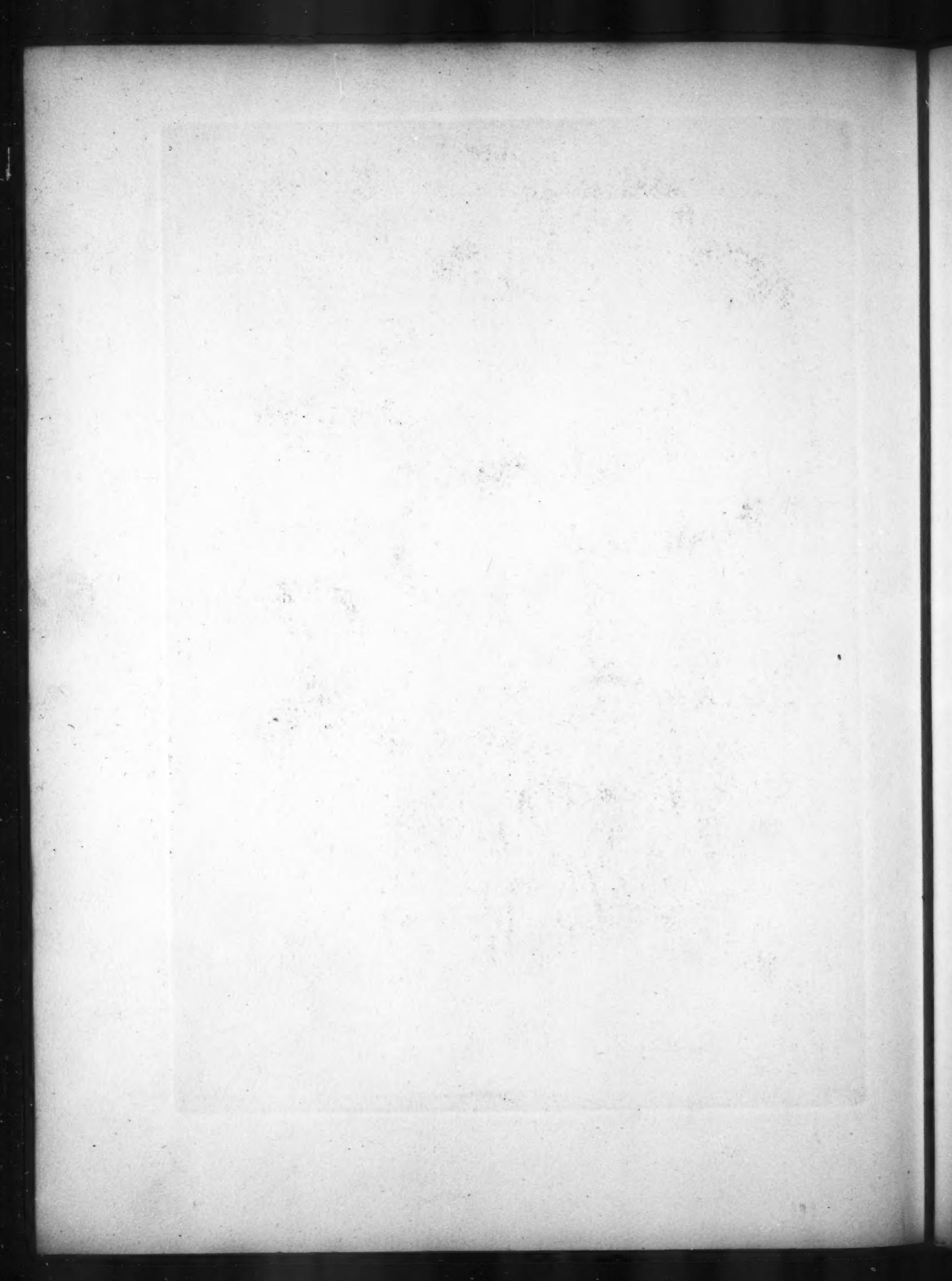
M. Lucien Doucet is a painter of fashion, and, as he must after his recent successes, he has contrived in his "Skating Party" to give us a really new and interesting sensation. The scene is the grounds of the Skating Club in the morning; while the timid and chilly shrink into their wicker boxes for shelter from the bitter wind, the more daring are cutting across the ice in wide sweeps and curves. In the distance the trees are veiled in mist; through the heavy grey sky peeps a faint rosy patch; it is the sun. Under this twilight-day, colours are softened, outlines are blurred, everything is toned down with amazing skill. Yet I must ask M. Doucet one question: has he really seen a lady skating in a red velvet gown?

The elegancies of life, to which M. Doucet is devoting himself, have long been familiar to M. Béraud; with what skill he treats them need not be told. He knows the *Parisienne* to her finger ends; whether wife or damsel, fine lady or workwoman, in short skirts or long skirts, in morning dress or evening dress, her head turned with amusement during the Carnival, or penitential during the Lenten fast of Holy Week, feather-brained, repentant, bent on pleasure and an epicure in evil, but always careful when the deed is done to make up her balance and curry favour with Heaven—that is the woman of Paris as M. Béraud paints her, and as we are never tired of seeing her. He shows her travelling too, in the picturesque scenery of Switzerland, "the Road from Zermatt to Stalden." To give the contrast its full effect this should have been hung by the side of the delightful picture of a woman of fashion "At prayer," wholly absorbed by the sacred words she is reading in her prayer-book, under the shadow of the church.

M. Victor Gilbert's "Flower-Girl at Cannes" lacks the strong harmonies which generally attract this artist. It is painted in a grey pitch of colour, and the air is dim with a cloud of dusty atoms, which shrouds



Louise



the road, the smart folks walking along it, and the gay stall of the flower-seller.

The same class of harmonies predominates in the "French invasion of Holland," during the Revolution, by M. François Flameng, but there is more emphasis in the colouring, red and blue of pure and vigorous tone being conspicuous. The army is marching through the snow, along a highway where windmills are wildly thrashing the low clouds heavy with endless flakes; it is all set forth with vivid and natural intention, and is one of the best things I have seen from M. François Flameng's hand by way of genre.

Archæological eccentricities spin cobwebs in M. Rochegrosse's brain; they did much to ensure the success of his "Andromache" some years since; they are singularly fatal to this visionary female form, whose spectral shape is lost in swathes of purplish gauze. This is Flaubert's Carthaginian heroine, the mysterious *Salammboë*; but however mysterious she may be, when the heroine steps over the limit line between literature and art, and more particularly plastic art, the laws of art must be obeyed. But this *Salammboë* remains a literary dream; she has neither substance, nor life, nor form, and the uniformly violet hue is simply horrible. It is not a painter's work, it is that of a spiritualist.

M. Edelfelt's "Virgin and Child" is a little masterpiece of sentiment; a very modern Virgin too, in her white calico wrapper, but how purely virginal, with her rippling fair hair, and how delightful is the colouring!

There is the same strain of sentiment, but more sternly treated in "Brittany women at prayer," which M. Dagnan-Bouveret has sent to balance his well-earned success at the Pastel show, with his woman in white and woman in deep mourning.

M. Heilbuth has won just admiration for the landscape in which he has placed his "Mignon," sharing a morsel of dry bread with an old man with a long beard—a wide clearing in a wood.

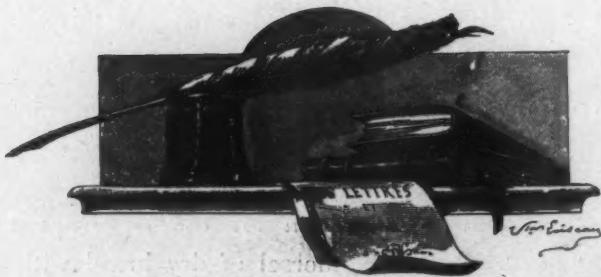
Then we have M. Gérôme with his lion seeking his prey, "Quærens quem devoret." The beast is slowly prowling along an African shore, washed by a blue sea and enclosed by mountains; his formidable paws dent the fine, deep sand, and the whole effect is of that imposing char-

acter which the painter affects, and which appeals so nearly to the emotions of the crowd.

There are several landscapes, and very fine ones, by MM. Boutet de Monvel, Pelouse, Dagnan-Bouveret, Cazin, Français, Japy, Billotte, Boucher, Sédille, Lematte and Vayson. "Normandy cows" by M. Léon Barillot : fruit by M. Zakarian ; sea pieces by MM. Montenard, Dauphin, Maurice Courant, and Auguste Flameng, all of which add to the variety of the show by the diversity and truthfulness of their treatment.

In sculpture there is a wax "Diana" by M. Mercié, of the purest dignity and quite divine grace of action ; a head of a child, really charming, in parti-coloured marbles, by M. Prosper d'Épinay; two terra cotta heads by M. de Saint-Marceaux, very remarkable for their distinct aim at individuality; one a bust of a "Street Girl," the other an expressive head of "An old Gamekeeper;" there are, too, some fine portrait-heads of women, in marble, by MM. Gautherin, Lanson, Franceschi, and Carlès. The smiling fair ones vie with each other in elegance, charm, and aristocratic distinction.

THIÉBAULT-SISSON.



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